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*Edward B. Mallery.
- Y. Mallery Jr.*

HISTORICAL

MEMOIRS

OF

MY OWN TIME.

BY

SIR N. W. WRAXALL, BART.,

AUTHOR OF "POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS."

Igitur ubi Animus requievit, non fuit Consilium Socordia atque Desidia bonum Otium contere-
re; neque vero Agrum colendo, aut venando, servilibus Officiis intentum, Ætatem agere. Sed a quo
incepto Studio me Ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus, statui Res gestas carptim, ut
quæque Memoria digna videbantur, perscribere: eo magis, quod mihi a Spe, Metu, Partibus Rei-
publicæ, Animus liber erat.

SALLUST.

PHILADELPHIA:
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1845.

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MY OWN TIME

ELI N. W. WALKER, BART.

Author of "The History of the

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THE HISTORY OF THE

1845



P R E F A C E .

HAVING been sent to the King's Bench Prison, in May, 1816, for a most unintentional act of inadvertence committed in the first edition of these Memoirs, I immediately stopped the sale, which has been suspended nearly two years. During that period of time, I have endeavoured, by very attentively revising and correcting the present edition, to avoid a similar error. While making those corrections, I have added a vast variety of new matter which suggested itself to me, and remodelled the whole work.

I have prefixed to this edition, my "Three Letters in Answer to the Reviewers." Not from the slightest consideration or respect for their calumnious criticisms ; but, as the best vouchers that I can offer to posterity, for my general impartiality, accuracy, and veracity. To posterity I look for my reward, perfectly satisfied if I can secure their approbation.

N. WM. WRAXALL.

Charlton, near Cheltenham,
2d May, 1818.



AN
ANSWER

TO

THE CALUMNIOUS MISREPRESENTATIONS OF THE "QUARTERLY REVIEW,"
THE "BRITISH CRITIC," AND THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW,"

CONTAINED

*In their Observations on Sir N. William Wraxall's Historical Memoirs of
His Own Time.*

AFTER the very severe personal attack made upon the author of these "Memoirs," and upon the work itself, by the writers of the "Quarterly Review;"—an attack in which they have been followed, though with somewhat diminished asperity, by the "British Critic;"—it might appear like conscious acquiescence, if I left it wholly without reply: Yet, as I am intimately persuaded that no panegyric can permanently elevate a mean work, and that no censures can long depress a book of merit, I should perhaps have left those strictures to their own intrinsic weight, if the editors of the "Quarterly Review" had not wantonly made Sir John Macpherson the object of their illiberal and pointed sarcasms. Independent of the high character, the public services, the financial resources, and recognised disinterestedness, which Sir John displayed when Governor-General of Bengal;—facts too well established in the memory of his countrymen to stand in need of my testimony;—I should have imagined, that if any portions of the present work could have challenged respect, Sir John's communications would have been entitled to it. Can they consider the par-

ticulars given relative to the Emperor Leopold the Second; a prince who was known to have honoured Sir John Macpherson with his confidence and friendship; as destitute of interest? The title of these facts to belief is irresistible, and they develop the secret policy, feelings, as well as character of that sovereign. From what information more authentic, can contemporary history be generally drawn? The anecdote of his present majesty and William, Duke of Cumberland, that of Hyder Ally, and many others, derived from the same source, which are scattered over the two volumes, speak for themselves. Contumelious irony and insulting epithets should be well weighed before they are applied; and when applied without obvious or apparent reason, they lead us to suspect some concealed motives for their adoption. Can any such have been offered and accepted in the case before us? The world will judge for themselves. To have censured *me* with severity, is explicable, perhaps deserved, in all cases natural, and in the common order of things. But, it is more difficult to account on ordinary principles, for the fact of honourable men exercising the

function of literary censors, incapable therefore of prostituting or selling their suffrage; heaping contemptuous expressions on a distinguished individual, merely for having contributed some passages to the work under their examination. When one reflects on these circumstances, one is almost led to imagine that the article in question was made *for* them, not *by* them; and though it is impossible to form even a conjecture of the quarter from whence such acrimonious comments could originate, yet is one tempted to exclaim with Faulconbridge in "King John," applying the words to the literary fathers of the "Quarterly Review,"

"Sir Robert might have eat his part in me,
Upon Good Friday, and ne'er broke his fast.—
—Sir Robert never help to make this leg."

The charges made against myself may be reduced to three; namely, my want of *ability*, and utter *inaptitude* for executing the work that I have undertaken; my *immorality*, and lastly, my *deviations from truth*, sometimes resulting from gross ignorance, sometimes destitute even of that apology. Heavier imputations can hardly be affixed on an author. Let us see how they are sustained.

The "Quarterly Review," after stating that I have "egregiously mistaken the amount of my resources and of my ability," compares me, for incapacity and self-importance, to "P. P. Clerk of this Parish," whose "Memoirs" furnish so much ludicrous entertainment in the works of *Pope*: while the "British Critic" characterizes the book as "mere gossip, and languid imbecility." It would not become me to appreciate the rank which my own understanding holds in the *scale* of intellect: but, either the public does not think so meanly of the "Historical Memoirs," and their author, or they manifest a most incorrigible obstinacy and inattention to the friendly admonitions reiterated by their literary guides, who exert every endeavour to prevent their readers from throwing away "eighteen shillings on a new edition in octavo of the daily advertiser." Now I can assure these gentlemen, that the first edition of this imbecile work,

consisting of one thousand copies, was sold in thirty-three days, between the 14th of April and the 17th of May of the present year; though the price was, not *eighteen*, but *six and twenty* shillings. No efforts of the press could bring out a second edition before the middle of June: but, of that edition, very nearly as many have been already sold. How are we to account for this fact?—"Audacious charges against distinguished persons,"—"stories resting on no basis of truth or probability,"—"flippant and offensive reports,"—followed by "pompous gossip, and inflated trash;"—how could men be found so weak as to purchase such a compilation of absurdity, plagiarism, and matter already better given in the *Annual Register*, or the *Court Calendar*? I leave the solution of this pecuniary enigma to the gentlemen reviewers, who will doubtless expose the juggle that has evidently been practised on the understandings and on the pockets of the British public.

Nor is it merely my defect of natural capacity, but, my utter unacquaintance with the sources, from which alone authentic materials for composing "Memoirs of My Own Time" could have been drawn, that disqualify me, as they assert, for so delicate a task. "It is very clear," says the *Quarterly Review*, "that Sir Nathaniel was not at all in the *secret* of any party, and the face of the political world was to him like the town clock. He saw the hand move, and heard the bell strike; but, observed nothing of the springs which impelled, and knew nothing of the principles that regulated the machine." The "British Critic" observes, "in fact Sir William Wraxall is not qualified as the author of Historical Memoirs of My Own Time. He has not been behind the curtain, and seen the wires of the puppets worked. To write Memoirs, so that they may form legitimate materials for history, it is necessary for men to be able to say, *Quorum Pars magna fui*." On reading these animadversions, one is almost tempted to doubt whether the reviewers had perused the work which they so severely criticise. It will not be disputed that I lived in daily and intimate friendship with the late Lord Sackville, then Lord George Germain, who continued

to be Secretary of State, down to January, 1782. From *him* I surely *might* have known much of the *secret* of the time ; and that I actually *did* know some particulars not unimportant, may be seen in the "Memoirs" themselves. From the Duke of Dorset, who was appointed ambassador to the Court of Versailles, in December, 1783, and whose confidence, as well as correspondence I enjoyed during the whole period of his embassy, I might have derived similar information. As I lived almost always in London, and attended the House of Commons regularly ; unless I laboured under insurmountable stupidity, I *must* have caught some warmth from the materials and persons that I approached.

But I differ on another point from the reviewers. For, I think, that if I had been "in the *secret* of any party ;" if I had "been behind the curtain, and seen the wires of the puppets worked ;" if I had been officially entrusted with facts or documents of state, I could not have divulged them during the life of George the Third. My very ability to compose Memoirs of My Own Time would have constituted my disqualification. Lord Clarendon, Burnet, Dodington, Horace Walpole, were all dead, before their Memoirs or reminiscences were given to the world. I am, in my own person, an instance and a proof of the position that I here maintain. During the years 1774 and 1775, I had the honour to be employed most confidentially by the late Queen of Denmark, Caroline Matilda, who then resided in the Hanoverian dominions, at the Castle of Zell. By that princess I was repeatedly sent over to his present majesty, charged with despatches of a very interesting nature, with whose contents I was intimately acquainted. So strong a sense did the king entertain of my services rendered to his sister, that he was graciously pleased, through the medium of Lord North himself, then first minister, to send me a present of a thousand guineas, accompanied with assurances of employment. Lord North delivered the message to me at Bushy Park, to which place he honoured me with an invitation for the express purpose. That nobleman knew from his majesty's own lips the *nature* of the negotiation with which I

had been entrusted by the Queen Matilda. Every fact here enumerated can be authenticated by persons who are still living, some of whom are of very high rank. But, though above forty years have elapsed since the decease of that amiable and unfortunate princess, I have never alluded in any of my publications to the negotiation in which I was consulted and employed by her majesty. Yet, if disclosed, it would excite great interest ;—for it resembled, in many particulars, a story of romance ; and according to the principle laid down by the reviewers, it would "form legitimate materials for history." But, those worthy gentlemen and I see objects through opposite ends of the telescope.

I come next to the charge of immorality and indecency, respecting which the "British Critic," after severely arraigning the work on this ground, says, "To the other sex, and the youth of our own, it is a sealed book, on account of its gross indecencies." It is to be regretted that the reviewers should not have glanced at the passages to which allusion is thus made. Such general and sweeping censures, without specifying any particular stories or parts, must be considered as very unfair. On what foundation are they preferred ? Is it on the anecdote related of Marshal Saxe and Mademoiselle de Chantilly ?—But, it will not be contended that in relating the marshal's conduct, I have spared the strongest epithets of abhorrence and indignation, which are so justly excited by his depraved treatment of an unprotected female. If it is meant to insinuate, that I convey improper information to the other sex, then, the works of Shakspeare, Otway, and Congreve, must be interdicted ; and still more, the productions of Pope, of Swift, and of Prior. Nay, every newspaper must be carefully removed :—for, they disclose far more than can be found in my two volumes. But, there remains still a minor imputation, which the "Quarterly Review" qualifies with the terms "of filthy and indecent garbage." Probably they have in view the series of facts mentioned after the account given of Ferdinand the Fourth, King of Naples, which are illustrative of Neapolitan and of French manners. But, are these fastidious critics

aware, or are they ignorant, that in De Thou, Sully, Davila, and D'Aubigné similar "garbage" is found? Are not Smollett, Gibbon, and Hawkesworth, full of such details? Sir John Dalrymple, by express permission, nay, under the sanction of his present majesty, has published letters far more exceptionable in point of delicacy (as, for instance, the memorable letter of Charles the Second to his sister, Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, dated "Whithall, 27th Feb., 1669," relative to which, Dalrymple himself says, that "it could hardly have been expected from a royal hand"), than any thing to be met with in my "Memoirs."

It remains to meet and repel the attack made on my veracity: which imputation, the "Quarterly Review" endeavours to sustain by selecting out of the two volumes about fourteen prominent instances of error, or as he denominates them, falsity. That my work is not exempt from many mistakes, I readily admit: but the reviewers, while censuring me, should have been careful not to fall into the very predicament which they reprobate. Great triumph is assumed, because I have named *the Duke of Dorset* as having informed me of the circumstance attending Lord Camden's being invested with the order of the *garter*. No doubt I erred in thinking that I received the account from *the Duke*. But even the reviewers dare not assert that the anecdote itself is false. They "never read," they say, "a more *impertinent* story." Impertinent stories may however be true stories. In fact, though the duke of Dorset could not have related it to me, there are ten persons now living who know and are ready to depose to its truth. How, indeed, could I invent it? I did not even know that Lord Camden's christian names were *John Jeffereys*, except in consequence of the King's remark. Here then, though I was partially mistaken, I was radically accurate.

In another assertion, namely, that I met Mr. Pitt in company with Mr. Rose, on his way to Paris, at *Antwerp*, in August, 1783, I have likewise erred. On appealing, as I did, to Mr. Rose himself, a few weeks ago, for the truth of the fact, he wrote me, "I was at Antwerp in, or about the month of August, 1783,

with Lord Thurlow, on a tour though a part of the continent. *Mr. Pitt was not with me*; but I met him, I think, in October, at Paris, where he went after a short stay at Rheims."—It appears therefore that in this matter likewise I fell into a partial mistake. In all the other instances brought to prove my deviation from fact, the reviewers are either mistaken, or ignorant, or they substitute their own narration as more worthy of credit than mine, though without adducing any proof. But, what shall we say to men, who are so utterly unacquainted with the very matters on which they presume to decide and to accuse, as to assert that "Robinson's counter-signing, as *secretary of the treasury*, on the refusal of Lord Weymouth, *the secretary of state*, an order for the attack on Pondicherry, in 1778, is a perfect impossibility?"

Mr. Robinson, writing to Sir John Macpherson, from "Wyke House, Isleworth," "23d May, 1800," in a letter, which has been long since printed, expressly says, "My correspondence with the Nabob (of Arcot) shall be produced, if desired, which it fell to my lot (*though not within my province*) to carry on: as also, in concert with the chairman and deputy chairman, *as a special committee*, to write out orders to the governor and council of Madras for the capture of Pondicherry, which was effected so expeditiously, *when his majesty's secretary of state would not sign such orders*." I leave this letter to be denied, or contradicted, by the reviewers.*

With similar boldness, but with as ill success, they pronounce on Mr. Fraser's presenting to King George the Second, when under secretary of state, a paper for his majesty's signature:—"A duty," say they, "which never *by any chance*, could have devolved on Mr. Fraser, or any other person in his situation." What! Not in case of the secretary of state's illness, or necessary absence, or dismissal, or under pressing circumstances, in order to expedite the despatch of public business? Do these gentlemen reviewers know or recollect, that

* The printed letter has been left with Messrs. Cadell and Davies, for general inspection, ever since August, 1815. It still remains in their possession.

on the 18th of December, 1783, this same Mr. Fraser, and Mr. Nepean (now Sir Evan), as *under secretaries of state*, by command of his present majesty, brought and delivered up into the king's hand, not merely papers, but the seals of Lord North's and Mr. Fox's departments, on their dismission from office? It is evident that the editors of the "Quarterly Review" have either got out of their depth, or have hoodwinked their own judgment, and modulated their own opinions in submission to others.

After *garbling*, not citing, the account that I have given of the late Lord Liverpool; and *omitting*, for reasons which will be obvious to every reader, some of the most discriminating circumstances of that nobleman's ordinary demeanour described by me; the "Quarterly Review" says, "In this character of Lord Liverpool, though it may be in the main tolerably correct, there are some errors which prove that Sir Nathaniel had no personal acquaintance with the person whose portrait he draws. For instance, nothing can be less accurate than the statement, that his lordship's education was narrow, and that he was more read in men than in books." I not only was known to Mr. Jenkinson with great familiarity, from 1781 down to 1786, when he went up to the House of Peers: but I was in constant habits of meeting and conversing with him. I have dined at his country seat, Addiscombe Place, near Croydon in 1784; as, probably, the Dowager Countess of Liverpool, and the present Duchess of Dorset, who were both there, may remember. Even down to a much later period of his life, he continued to honour me with his regard; and as late as 1797, he presented me, himself, in the queen's drawing room at St. James's, to the Princess of Orange. So much for my "personal acquaintance" with the Earl of Liverpool. As to his "university education," and his having "continued all his life, what is called a bookish man," which the reviewers assert; I can only repeat, that though he might be "a classical scholar," and might "have possessed a great variety of reading," yet his whole life, his speeches in parliament, and his

elevation, sufficiently prove, that "he had read men more than books."

If I do not descend to answer and refute the other instances adduced of pretended error or falsehood, it is, because the examples cited are either in themselves of little moment, or must rest on the degree of credibility due to the reviewers, as opposed to my own testimony. Let the public decide between us. It is not of very material consequence, whether "the Royal George" went down in the midst of *Portsmouth Harbour* or at *Spithead*. Nor is it very important, whether Lord Bute sold his house in Berkeley Square to Lord Shelburne, *before* he inhabited it, or *afterwards*. The "Royal George" perished in an instant, by the effect of fatal negligence; and the Earl of Bute constructed the magnificent mansion which was purchased by Lord Shelburne. These constitute the leading facts in both cases. There are other passages, where the reviewers have, either wilfully or unintentionally, misstated and misinterpreted my meaning. I have never asserted, as they affect to suppose and to assume, that "*the cabinet* of 1801 considered peace with France as impolitic, unsafe, and unwise:" but, that his majesty was known so to regard it; and therefore that "Lord Hawksbury affixed his signature to the articles, not only without *the king's* consent or approbation, but without his knowledge." The difference between the two statements is obvious.

The "Quarterly Review" arraigns severely the details into which I have entered when discussing the characters or public merits of eminent men. "He seems to consider it necessary," say they, "to write a professed review of the manners, morals, talents, and *Res gestæ* of each. In this way, Lord North and Lord Sackville are spread over forty pages; and Pitt and Fox have, each, near thirty to their respective shares." On reading this charge, one is tempted almost to doubt whether it can be serious. Do not memoirs necessarily include biography in their range? What constitutes the peculiar charm of *Plutarch*, except the very circumstance, that he enters mi-

nutely into the domestic and private life, as well as into the official acts of his heroes? Even *Suetonius*, a writer of very inferior merit in many points of view, yet awakens attention by the anecdotes that he recounts of the Cæsars, because he conducts us into their apartments, and renders us familiar with them. De Thou and D'Aubigné descend to similar details. Even Grammont, St. Simon, and Horace Walpole, interest us on the same principle. If Fox and Pitt, if Lord North and Lord Sackville, if Burke and Dunning do not challenge minute investigation, who can deserve it? Lord Clarendon and Burnet are liable to the same accusation, which constitutes indeed their greatest claim to be read by posterity. It will not, I hope, be said that I am comparing myself to these distinguished writers, because, like *Trinculo* in "the Tempest," I attempt to "creep under their gabardine," in order to avoid the storm. I only endeavour to justify my attempt by setting up their precedent.

The "British Critic" is indeed at variance on this point with the "Quarterly Review;"—for, the former of these publications, when speaking of "the characters of the principal political leaders of the day," adds, "these we esteem by far the best part of his work." They retract, it is true, their approbation in the next sentence, by subjoining that the characters "are written in a loose, prolix, wordy style." But, can we annex any value to the praise, or any importance to the blame of men, who, arrogating to decide on literary merit, are not even exempt from errors of orthography? Of men who write *Vallois*, for Valois; *Luzinska*, for Leczinska, *Malgrida* for Malagrida, *Haydue* for Heyduc, *Vintrimille* for Vintimille; and many others? I forbear to make any comment on the manner in which both these reviews have mentioned the prosecution commenced against me by Count Woronzow, for having inadvertently mentioned his name in a way hurtful to his feelings;—a circumstance which could not have arisen from any intention to injure or offend, which I regret, and for which, as soon as I was apprised of it, I made him every

becoming apology. If decency and liberality of mind did not restrain the pens of these critics, or moderate their virtuous indignation, other considerations might and ought to have imposed limits on them. Are they aware, that by attempting, through the medium of the press, to influence the public mind, and to anticipate the supposed judgment of a court of criminal law on a matter pending and not yet come to hearing; *they* are guilty of a far more heinous offence than the one which it is falsely affected to attribute to *me*? For the purity and majesty of English jurisprudence discountenances, reprobates, and punishes every appeal to the passions of the multitude, as subversive of the first principles of equity and justice.

Having now so far finished my defence at the bar of literary criticism, I will candidly confess the inherent, indelible, and inexpressible faults which pervade every page of the "Historical Memoirs," and of which I own myself culpable: nay, from which I principally claim for the work any title to be read either by the present or by the future age. They are,

Its freedom, impartiality, and truth.

I am well aware that these qualities never yet did recommend, and never will recommend, to the favour of princes, ministers, or of the great. They deprecate all disclosures; hardly approving even panegyric, unless restrained within cautious, humble, and guarded limits. Party, and party only, can, in this country, support the man who ventures to spurn these prudent boundaries. But I have not secured that protection. Though nine years have scarcely elapsed since Pitt and Fox, both, paid the debt to nature; though the first officers of the state, and the benches in either House of Parliament, are still filled with their respective enemies, relatives, and adherents; I have (most imprudently I own) spoken of them, as I would do of the ministers of Queen Anne; of Lord Godolphin, and Lord Bolingbroke. So have I done of George the Third, as if I were writing of William the Third, or of Elizabeth. All the affectionate ve-

neration necessarily inspired by his virtues, all the admiration excited by the rectitude of his intentions, has not induced me to attempt to conceal or to deny, that almost from the period of his accession down to the termination of the American war, his present majesty did not enjoy popularity. He might have merited it, but he did not possess it. Where then, I would ask, can this work find protectors, except in those who respect *truth* as the only quality that can render history valuable? I well know that I have neither conciliated the followers of Pitt, of Fox, or of Lord North. Of course, in the spirit of party, I can hope for no asylum. I look beyond the present generation for my reward, namely, public approval. That hope, whether fallacious or not, has hitherto sustained me under literary and legal attacks. It will animate me in the future progress of these Memoirs; which, whatever may be their errors or defects, and whatever treatment their author may experience from the age in which he lives, will, he confidently trusts, be favourably received by posterity.

N. WILLM. WRAXALL.

Charlton, near Cheltenham,
22d August, 1815.

I had scarcely finished my Answer to the "Quarterly Review" and "British Critic" when I find myself attacked by a still more formidable, because a more voluminous, and, if possible, a more acrimonious antagonist, in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review." Though, as coming after the two former, he can only glean the field which they have reaped, and has only repeated the same charges or accusations which they had already preferred; yet having thought it necessary to bestow on my work, in order, as he says, "to expose its worthlessness," near two and forty pages of his loyal and high principled review, he claims from me a separate and appropriate reply. He begins by animadverting on my account of Catherine the Second. His words are, speaking of the second edition, "The

deaths of the Emperor Peter, of Prince Ivan, of the supposed Princess Tarakanoff, of the Grand Duchess the first wife of Paul, and indeed, that of the Princess of Wirtemberg, are still laid to the charge of the empress. Such a series of murders, including that of a husband, of *a boy*, and of three young women, one of whom was a daughter-in-law, has not been charged on any individual, at least in the modern history of Europe."

Now, in order to expose the injustice and falsity of the two first of these accusations, namely, that of Peter the Third and of Ivan (which latter prince, though he was born in 1740, and killed by his guards in 1764, the "Edinburgh Review" no doubt from ignorance, denominates *a boy*), I have only to cite my own account. No man disputes that Catherine ascended or assumed the Russian throne by the deposition of her husband, which was followed, a few days afterwards, by his death. I have said, when mentioning him and Ivan, "Sir Thomas Wroughton always spoke to me of Catherine's participation or acquiescence in the death of Peter the Third as *involuntary, reluctant, and the result of an insurmountable necessity*. He even considered her *knowledge* of the *destruction* of the unfortunate Emperor Ivan, who was stabbed by his own guards at Schlussembourg in 1764, with a view to prevent his being liberated by Mirovitsch, as *exceedingly problematical*." This is almost the only *mention* that I have made either of one or of the other of those princes throughout the whole work; except that I elsewhere say, "Peter the Third disappeared in 1762, as the unfortunate Emperor Ivan did in 1764." What reply can these worthy Scotch reviewers set up, after such an exposal of their calumnious misrepresentation? Their zeal to rescue Catherine's memory from imputation, even at the expense of truth, would indeed be ludicrous, if it did not excite indignation. One would almost imagine that it was "the great Napoleon," or the virtuous Carnot, in whose defence they had drawn their pen. While I am speaking on this subject, I will further add, that all the information which I ever received at Petersburg

in 1774, when Ivan had been dead only ten years, and Peter the Third scarcely twelve; went to confirm Sir Thomas Wroughton's opinion, of Catherine's repugnance to sanction or permit any violence being used towards the deposed emperor, her husband. She long refused, even with tears, to authorize measures of rigour, and he fell a victim to revolutionary military necessity, sustained by the fears of the conspirators who had placed Catherine on the throne. She was only a passive agent in the business. Nor is it in any manner proved that she was acquainted with Mirovitch's attempt to liberate Ivan. The empress received the intelligence of that tragical event while in public company at Riga; and opinions were greatly divided on the subject at the time. But, whether she was guilty or innocent, I have no where given even an opinion throughout this whole work. Yet, these constitute *two* out of the "series of murders," which "the Edinburgh Review" says, I have "laid to the charge of the empress."

Relative to the death of the supposed Princess Tarrakanoff, it is not necessary for me to make any defence, having only alluded briefly to Castera's account of that event, published in 1797; and having given, at some length, Sir John Dick's explanation of his share in the transaction; leaving the judgment to be formed respecting it, to the reader. Far from aggravating Catherine's culpability in the part which *she* acted toward the female in question, I have rather defended her conduct. My words are, "It is even very difficult altogether to condemn the Empress Catherine for endeavouring to get possession of her person." And I have stated my reason for so thinking, namely, that impostors were nearly as dangerous to a czarina placed on the throne of Muscovy by a revolution, as a rightful pretender to the crown. "These considerations," I have added, "must, at least in a political point of view, *justify* Catherine for taking measures to prevent the lady in question from being made an instrument in the hands of vindictive or ambitious individuals, to accomplish their projects of vengeance against herself." I have neither asserted nor denied, that

the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff was drowned by the waters of the Neva entering her prison. Castera says that she did so perish. Sir John Dick admits that she died in prison: but he asserts, her end was produced by chagrin. Let the reader judge between the two accounts. And now I would calmly ask the "Edinburgh reviewers," how they can so disgrace their own characters and profession, as to lend themselves to such attacks as these? Their own feelings, and the public condemnation, will amply avenge me, by exposing them to general censure.

I come to the fourth charge against me, that of the death of the grand duchess, first wife of Paul:—a charge drawn up with elaborate malevolence, and supported with no ordinary degree of historical and critical ability. "No murder recorded in civilized history," say the Edinburgh reviewers, "approaches this. Paul is involved in it, as much as his mother; for it varies the atrocity very slightly, whether he acted from subserviency to the empress, from adoption of her flagitious policy, or from resentment at the supposed gallantries of his wife."—They add, "to publish such stories lightly, is no small offence."—Who, on perusing these passages, would not be led to imagine, that I had now for the first time revealed to the world this story; or at least first published it through the medium of the press? But, unfortunately for the reviewers, as they themselves are obliged to admit, the whole narration has been given in print, eighteen years ago, in French; a language much more universally read than English; printed at Paris, in 1797, immediately after the empress Catherine's decease, and circulated all over Europe. Paul had then newly ascended the Russian throne, and scarcely twenty-one years had elapsed since his first wife's death. Neither he, nor his ministers, could be ignorant of the existence of the work in question; and the lapse of time was not sufficiently great to have carried off all the individuals who might have elucidated the nature of the grand duchess's end. Even *Levesque*, who mentions the event, though more doubtfully, and in a manner that leaves his own opinion of it uncertain, published his

work in 1800. Yet Paul never attempted to answer these calumnious misrepresentations, though he reigned down to 1801. It has been truly said that "an injudicious friend is the worst of enemies." The Edinburgh reviewers stand in this predicament. For, they must either be compelled to admit that Paul, knowing himself and the empress his mother to be innocent, yet calmly acquiesced in the accusation; not participating the anxiety manifested by his present advocates, and utterly regardless of his reputation; or they must be reduced to suppose that he had reasons for not stirring the business of his first consort's death. I leave them to choose between the two alternatives. They cannot pretend to believe that Paul, even though he had been actually implicated in the grand duchess's end, could have wanted venal and prostitute pens to have undertaken his defence. The historic, as well as the poetic muse, frequently indeed succeeds best in fiction. The application of these remarks will be easily made by the Edinburgh reviewers.

Let us now advert to my own account of the event under discussion. It is given on the testimony of two princes of Hesse Philipstahl who were at Vienna in 1778, and seemed to derive some probability or confirmation, from the circumstance of the person named as the grand duchess's lover being then resident in the Austrian capital. But I have contented myself with relating the story, without asserting that I believed the empress or Paul to have committed the act attributed to them. It is true that I have added, "When we contemplate the history of the imperial family of Russia, from the reign of Peter the first inclusive, down to the present time, we shall find nothing in the story above related, either improbable in itself, or inconsistent with the measures to which the sovereigns of that empire have continually had recourse, under similar circumstances, in various instances." Do not the reviewers know that the wife of the Czarowitz Alexis, only son of Peter the Great, perished or disappeared in 1715, precisely like Wilhelmina, princess of Hesse Darmstadt, *in childbed*;—an event which was produced by the fero-

cious treatment of her husband? She was in the flower of youth, beautiful, virtuous, and at least as much an object of compassion, as the first wife of Paul. Did not Alexis himself disappear in 1719, under circumstances which have no parallel in modern history, except Philip the Second's execution of Don Carlos? Contemplate the arbitrary acts of barbarous power, exercised under Elizabeth, Catherine's predecessor; when women of quality, stript, were exposed to the lash of the executioner, and expired under the punishment of the *knout*, on a public scaffold. They excite horror, and may justify us in supposing that events, which never could be credited, if the scene lay at Stockholm, at Berlin, or at Madrid, might possibly have been true at Petersburg. If, nevertheless, I were called on to state my own opinion respecting the death of the grand duchess in question, I owe it to my love of truth to say, that I believe it resulted from natural causes, and was not accelerated by any violence. But, as no measures were ever adopted either by Catherine or by Paul, to disprove the reports circulated under the former, and printed under the latter sovereign, accusing them of having accelerated her end, the subject must remain matter of historical doubt and discussion.

It is a duty incumbent on the "Edinburgh reviewers," not merely as calling themselves impartial and honorable literary *censors*, but, from regard to their moral character as *men*; to explain on what ground they have thought proper to accuse me of laying to Catherine's charge the last of this "series of murders." I mean, that of the Princess of Wirtemberg. They must either have done it from a systematic sacrifice of truth, to other motives best known to themselves; or they never can have read the remarks made by me on the event in question:—for my opinion and observations are altogether favourable to the empress, and tend to acquit her of any participation in that princess's death, even on the supposition that it was not natural:—a supposition which I by no means sanction. That the illustrious and unfortunate lady was confined in the interior of Muscovy, for some asserted errors of conduct; that she there expired

at the end of about eighteen months; that her body was refused to be delivered up to her parents; that no *procès verbal*, or authenticated account of her disorder and decease, was ever published by the court of Petersburg, or of Stutgard; that injurious reports respecting her end were circulated throughout Europe, and obtained considerable belief even in this country; — on all these points, there is no difference of opinion. They are universally admitted. Now, what have I said? — After stating the suspicions entertained of poison, or other means having been resorted to, I add, “It is natural to ask, why did Catherine cause the princess to be imprisoned or poisoned? Her gallantries, however culpable or notorious they might be, yet constituted no crime against the empress of Russia; who exhibited in her own conduct an example of emancipation from all restraint and decorum on the article of female irregularities of deportment.” — “In the case of the two emperors, Peter the Third and Ivan; as well as in the instances of the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff, and of the first grand Duchess of Russia; the motives for her commission of a crime, by depriving them of life, are obvious. *But none such appear in the instance before us.*” — What answer can the reviewers make to this charge of wilful misrepresentation and false accusation, which I bring against them?

Having thus vindicated myself, as I trust, satisfactorily, from the five imputations of the Edinburgh reviewers, respecting the Empress of Russia, and retorted on themselves the calumnious accusations with which they have loaded me; I will only add that I perfectly acquiesce in the conclusion to which they come at last. They say, “the probability seems to be, that this princess, at the desire of her husband, for real or supposed indiscretions, was relegated to a provincial prison, in a country where the secret death of an illustrious prisoner, though really natural, might be plausibly imputed to assassination.” That the present king of Wirtemberg proved to George the Third, by documents and papers the most authentic, that he had not any knowledge of, or participation in, his first wife’s death, is

incontestable. His majesty, as I have stated, “after a full inspection of them, became perfectly convinced of his having had no part in that dark and melancholy transaction.” This fact I have given on the authority of a gentleman who well knew, and had seen, those proofs. He is the same individual whom the Edinburgh reviewers contemptuously call my “Informer,” and of whose interesting recital they speak, as “a long and very dull story.” These reviewers are unconsciously treading on very delicate ground, and should be reminded of Hamlet’s advice to the players, “not to say more than is set down for them.” “His majesty’s reluctance and “hesitation” to conclude the union of the prince of Wirtemberg with his eldest daughter, to which I allude, probably arose only from parental attachment. And, without having recourse to any supposition of violence, we may easily conceive that the decease of the first princess might have been caused by her own situation, shut up in a Muscovite castle, deprived of her German attendants, male and female, a prey to solitude and chagrin. Such circumstances are usually of themselves sufficient to abbreviate the term of human life.

I shall now endeavour with calmness, — for truth is a powerful buckler; — to repel some of the minor calumnies or distortions of fact, in which the reviewers indulge themselves. Joseph, king of Portugal, they represent me to have described “as a drunken old Moor.” My words are these. “In his cheeks he had a high scorbutic humor, attributed commonly to excesses of wine; though it might partly arise from violent exercise constantly taken under a burning sun. His face, indeed, was nearly as dusky as that of a Moor.” With similar regard to veracity, these gentlemen say, “Sir Nathaniel’s *hero*, among the sovereigns of the eighteenth century, is Louis the Fifteenth:” — an assertion contradicted by the *Memoirs* under our review. I have, indeed, spoken of a *portion* of Louis’s reign with the warmest approbation. So I should have done, when writing of the “*Quinquennium Neronis*,” the first five years of Nero, if I had composed the history of that execrable monster’s life. But, I have de-

pictured Louis the Fifteenth during the *concluding* years of his government, as a man sunk in every degrading gratification or pursuit. After stating that "Louis, during his last years, excites disgust, unqualified by any sentiment of pity, or of respect;" I add, "his death, which took place under these circumstances, was hailed by the French as the era of their liberation from a yoke equally disgraceful and severe." Reviewers, who thus unblushingly trample on truth, must set little value on character, or must hold the understandings of mankind in great contempt. I have elsewhere said, when mentioning Louis the Fifteenth, "Unquestionably, the four last years of his reign were passed in a manner worthy of Sardanapalus; oblivious to his public duties, insensible to national glory, and lost to every sentiment of private virtue, or even of decorum." And this is the king whom I am represented as having made my "hero."

Nor have they less misrepresented my assertion, that "Louis covered himself and his country with military glory." The paragraph in question is as follows. "If Louis the Fifteenth, by the peace of 1736, acquired Lorrain for France; he covered himself and his country with military glory *during the war that commenced in 1741, on the death of the emperor Charles the Sixth.*" Can this fact be disputed? Did not Marshal Saxe defeat us and our allies in repeated battles; overrun the whole Netherlands, break down the Dutch barrier, and threaten the total overthrow of the balance of Europe, as much as France did in 1793? At the peace of Aix la Chapelle, in 1748, Louis had attained to a very elevated point of glory, cemented by moderation. But he lived to become the scorn of his subjects and of Europe, While, however, I thus expose the wanton or inexcusable inattention to fact in the reviewers, I must with equal candour admit that they have pointed out an error in this part of my work, which I gladly correct. It is where I have said that Henry the Fourth conquered the counties of *Bourg* and *Bresse*. It should have been *Bugey* and *Bresse*. The mistake was a mere inadvertence of the pen, but I return them thanks for having

noticed it. Indeed, no details, however minute, seem to have been considered by them as beneath their notice, which might, as they hoped, cover me with confusion. I would nevertheless ask, on what ground they presume to assert that I have made "a horrible insinuation against the late stadtholder." *Where, and what is it?* They are bound to speak out. I have said of the Prince of Orange, that, "after arriving in this country, under a dark political cloud, and after residing here many years, without acquiring the public esteem, or redeeming his public character, he finally and precipitately quitted England under a still darker cloud." What "horrible insinuation" is couched under these words? "*Honi soit, qui mal y pense.*"

I pass over the coarse and vulgar accusations of "nastiness, obscenity, impurity," &c., these being, as I before observed, only "the gleanings of the field;" and having already answered their predecessors, the "Quarterly Review" and "British Critic," on all these points. But I cannot allow their animadversions on the fate of John and Cornelius de Witt to remain unnoticed. If the Edinburgh reviewers had looked into the *second* edition of my work, which lay before them, they would there have seen, that in order to guard against malignant representations respecting the death of the two de Witts, which, I was sensible, might be made, from the brief manner in which I had alluded to their tragical end; I have said, "Van Berkel merited the fate which *unjustly befel the two de Witts*, and only escaped it by the inert and incapable conduct of the Stadtholder." Yet, this is the passage for which the reviewers assert, "I should be punished by the general execration of mankind," as exhibiting "symptoms of unmanly ferocity," and "degrading the English language into a vehicle of cowardly and sanguinary maxims." Perhaps, however, I ought not to be surprised at this exquisite sensibility of the Edinburgh reviewers, when engaged in the pious office of rescuing from odium the name of *Van Berkel*; an enemy of England and of the House of Orange, devoted to the interests of France and of America. He was a natural and proper object of *their* admiration, in proportion

as he excites opposite sensations in every loyal or patriotic bosom.

Whether *Thiebault* or I are most in the right, as to the *cause* of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick's dismissal from the Prussian service, is a matter of very little moment. I am most ready to allow and believe, that *Thiebault*, who resided long at Berlin, is more likely to have given the true reason than myself. The unworthy motives assumed by the reviewers, as dictating the manner in which I have mentioned the regent; followed by their comments on my assertion, that "his present majesty resembles the Antonines in the leading features of his character;"—such animadversions neither admit reply, nor merit an answer. But, when they pass the line of truth in order to oppress me, I shall always flatly contradict them. How are they warranted in asserting that I have said, "George the Second *eagerly* told the countess of Yarmouth, as a *piece of good news*, 'Freddy is dead.'" My account runs thus. "His majesty had just sat down to play, and was engaged at cards, when a page, despatched from Leicester House, arrived, bringing information that the prince was no more. He received the intelligence *without testifying either emotion or surprise*. Then rising, he crossed the room to Lady Yarmouth's table, who was likewise occupied at play: and leaning over her chair said to her in a low tone of voice, in German, 'Fritz is dode.' Freddy is dead. Having communicated it to her, he instantly withdrew."—Where is the *eagerness* or the *joy*, as at a *piece of good news*, here manifested? It exists only in the pages of these Scotch *Munckhausens*, who exaggerate or twist every fact to their own purposes. That George the Second did not particularly love his eldest son, nor perhaps had any great reason so to do, is matter of notoriety: but he did not disgrace himself before spectators, by displaying his satisfaction at the prince's decease. How hard run must these reviewers have been, to find *real* matter of censure or of condemnation in my work, when they are reduced to *invent* circumstances, to suit the humiliating task which they have undertaken to perform.

But we come now to "the coalition of Lord North and Fox;" a subject on which their feelings overcoming their judgment, have carried them far beyond the sober bounds of reason or of decorum. While they accuse me of "atrociously libelling the memory of Lord North;" because I assign motives to justify or palliate his union with Fox, drawn from prudence, and from his political situation at the close of the American war; they suppose me to be animated by "rancour" against Mr. Fox, which sentiment they ingeniously ascribe to "sycophancy." To whom, I would ask, could I make my court in 1815, by descending systematically to calumniate Mr. Fox, if I were capable of such baseness? It would be thrown away on the king, and no man doubts that it would awaken sentiments of mingled aversion and resentment in the bosom of the regent. Lord Liverpool, I fancy, will not suspect me of meaning to render myself acceptable to *him*, by traducing an illustrious adversary, long since dead. "But, it requires," say the reviewers, "the fullest operation of the composing power of contempt, to preserve the mind from some indignation, at reading in such a writer as this, that Mr. Fox's claims on office were unsustained by moral qualities." Did these gentlemen never hear the answer of Father O'Leary to the Bishop of Waterford, when discussing the doctrine of purgatory! "Your lordship," said he, "may go *farther*, and fare *worse*." I have spoken of Mr. Fox, as I thought of him, with admiration, but, with freedom; and I believe, even his friends admit, with candour and impartiality, though I generally differed from him on political subjects, and peculiarly disapproved of the part that he took after the commencement of the French revolution.

It is, however, only by unfairly selecting a few detached words of a long sentence, and reasoning on so fallacious a basis, calculated for low purposes of deception, that the reviewers can pretend even to accuse me of diminishing Mr. Fox's claim to moral esteem and approbation. I regret the necessity of citing from my own work, but it is necessary to my honour, to expose the malignant and uncandid nature of the at-

tacks made on me. In summing up Mr. Fox's character, I have said, "If energy of mind, enlargement of views, firmness of character, amenity of manners, acquaintance with foreign courts and languages, facility in conducting business, and prodigious intellectual powers, combining eloquence, application, as well as discernment;—if these endowments are considered as forming an incontestable claim to public employment, *unsustained by moral qualities, or by property*; we must condemn the sentence of exclusion passed upon him. Those persons, on the other hand, who consider all talent, however eminent, as radically defective, unless sustained by decorum, and a regard for opinion; as well as all who prefer sobriety of conduct, regularity of deportment, and the virtues of private life, above any ability which nature can bestow on man;—lastly, all who regard judgment, under the control of strict principle, as the most indispensable requisite of a minister, to whom the public honour and felicity are in some measure necessarily entrusted;—such persons will probably hesitate before they decide too hastily on the degree of censure or of commendation which the king's conduct towards Fox ought to excite in our minds." Now, after perusing this description, any unprejudiced mind may pass sentence. Let it be remembered too, that the portrait here drawn is not the Mr. Fox of *fifty*, such as we remember him, residing at St. Anne's Hill, a married man, leading a domestic life, in the bosom of letters and researches of taste: but it is Mr. Fox at *thirty-two*, as he was in 1781, living in St. James's street, close to Brookes's; and still devoted to those gratifications by which he had impaired his health, ruined his fortune, and diminished his brilliant reputation.

The reviewers dilate, with a sort of exultation, on the circumstances of Mr. Fox's having passed three nights at Lord Rockingham's house, armed, during the riots of June, 1780; and on his having collared one of the rioters, whom he brought prisoner to Grosvenor Square. No man ever questioned his attachment to the head of his own party, or his abhorrence of the excesses of a ferocious mob, which manifested as much antipa-

thy to the members of opposition as to the government. But, the question is, did Mr. Fox, "when pressed in the House of Commons to co-operate for the extrication of the capital, lend any support to administration in that moment of national distress," as Burke did?—I shall not descend to answer the accusation of "slandering Lord Effingham," or "insinuating that the opposition were connected with the rioters;" because, only determined malignity can lay such absurd imputations to my charge, after perusing the passages where those subjects are mentioned in the Memoirs. On General Fitzpatrick, I am necessitated to say a few words, though reluctantly, as I am charged with "falsehood," in speaking of the decay of his talents, previous to his decease. The last time that I ever met that distinguished person in company, was, one morning, at Cholmondeley House, a short time before his death; when, not only his faculties, but even his articulation seemed to me to have sustained a diminution, or a shock; though probably, as *Prior* said of Charles, Earl of Dorset, he might still "drivel better sense than other men spoke." Dining at the same house, either on that day, or soon afterwards, and mention being accidentally made of General Fitzpatrick; some decline of his intellectual fire and vigour of mind seemed to be generally admitted by all present. But, even on a supposition that I erred in so imagining, how do I deserve to have it asserted, that "I seek a disgraceful popularity, by exposing the decay of men of genius, to make sport for the rabble?" The reviewers ought to be well remunerated for these sacrifices of decorum, truth, and character. I have spoken of General Fitzpatrick with delicacy and concern. Does Johnson "seek disgraceful popularity, or make sport for the rabble," when in his translation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, he observes,

"From Marlbro's eyes the tears of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ler, and a show?"

I leave Dr. Musgrave's information and evidence to its own intrinsic weight; only reminding the reviewers, that when they rashly, as well as ignorantly assert,

that "the tale was patronized by no one in or out of Parliament, with the single exception of the unscrupulous *Junius*," they probably have never read *Wilkes's* Letter to the Electors of Aylesbury, dated "Paris, 22d October, 1764;" or the memorable "North Briton," No. 45. Whether either, or both these productions, constitute authority, I will not venture to say: but they unquestionably tend to corroborate Ross Mackay's account of the venality of Parliament in 1763. Anxious as I am to take leave of my Scotch accusers, I must yet notice the manner in which they inculcate my mention of the calumnious reports respecting Lord Shelburne's having purchased into the funds, previous to the peace of 1783. If there be a part of these Memoirs, in which, contrary to my ordinary practice, I have used the greatest caution; leaning throughout the whole narration to a disbelief of the act imputed, and attributing the report itself to "the active malignity of the first minister's enemies," it is on the point in question. I have even cited Mr. Pitt's speech in the House of Commons, of the 21st February, 1783, in which he alluded to "the arts of defamation adopted by Lord Shelburne's opponents, for the purpose of degrading him in the national estimation." At the same time, truth compelled me to add, that "either he subsequently altered his opinion, or his actions contradicted his professions." And who, I would ask, were Lord Shelburne's most inveterate enemies, whose arts Mr. Pitt characterized as "deserving his scorn?" Were they not the adherents of Mr. Fox? Did these well-informed reviewers never hear of a periodical paper called "The Jesuit," which appeared during Lord Shelburne's administration, in 1782? And are they so ignorant as not to know who was its principal author? Let the reviewers peruse the speeches of Burke, and of Lee, then Solicitor General, pronounced in Parliament, between July, 1782, and March, 1783. It seems impossible for language to accumulate more severe moral charges than they respectively heaped upon the first Lord of the Treasury. Lee described him "as deficient in probity, integrity, and every estimable quality." And am I now, in 1815, to be held

up to universal reprobation, for only mentioning that injurious reports were circulated relative to the Earl of Shelburne? If history be sunk so low, and if reviewers are with impunity, from their retreat on the banks of the Firth of Forth, or hid in the *wyndes* of Edinburgh, to exhaust their impotent rage on any man who presumes to write with freedom on public men and public events, it is time to have done with historical research.

"Frangere leves Calamos, et scinde, Thalia, Libellos?"

Only one word more on this subject. "It would not be fit," says the reviewers, "to lay open the circumstances which occasioned the political difference of Lord Shelburne and Mr. Pitt, for so trifling a purpose as that of confuting Sir N. Wraxall." Yet, as two and thirty years have now elapsed since it took place, one should have thought the secret might have safely been divulged, especially as it would tend altogether to rescue Lord Shelburne's public character from any possible misrepresentation. But, it seems, Mr. Pitt did not confer the Marquisate of Lansdown on that nobleman; which title, we are now told, "was requested and obtained directly from the king, by the Duke of Rutland, on his accepting the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland." I do not presume to contradict this affirmation of the reviewers; simply remarking, that if the Duke of Rutland could thus dispose of the highest honours of the crown, without the participation or intervention of the first minister, in favour of a person with whom he was at variance, or with whom, at least, he had a "political difference; the duke was more powerful than the first lord of the treasury. But there occurs another apparent difficulty respecting it:—for, the Duke of Rutland went over to Dublin, early in March, 1783, whereas Lord Shelburne was not raised to the marquisate before the end of the following November. I leave these little knots to be untied by the reviewers.

For all the insulting personal abuse with which they have honoured me, for the reflections on what they are pleased to denominate my "public morality,"

for the generous solicitude that they demonstrate to prevent the mischief which must arise to society, from the diffusion of a work so malignant, immoral, and licentious, as the "Historical Memoirs," I thank the Edinburgh reviewers. Their list of "Gallicisms, Scotticisms, Hibernicisms, barbarisms, vulgarisms, incoherent metaphors, bad English, and absolute nonsense," to be found in the work; and which they kindly point out to the world, as literary rocks and quicksands, to be avoided by succeeding writers; claim the public gratitude. There is great philanthropy in such disinterested attention to prevent so pernicious a book, *of which two thousand have been already sold*, from penetrating any further, and corrupting the whole inhabitants of the United Kingdom. I trust the "Society for the Suppression of Vice" will notice, as becomes them, these general efforts of men, who can have no motive except virtuous indignation to propel their endeavours; and who find the reward of their labours in their own conscious rectitude. Such men are rare on this side of the Tweed, and should be encouraged wherever they are found. Yet, with their zeal, it would be as well if they mixed a little knowledge and moderation. For instance, when, towards the conclusion of their philippic, speaking of me, they say, "He is so perfectly regardless of truth, that we are convinced there is not a *single anecdote* in the book which can be safely believed on his testimony," they compel me to stand on my defence. Not a single anecdote! What! not the account given of Lord Sackville's reception of the news of the surrender of the British army at York Town! The Earl of Glandore, and Mr. Herbert of Muckruss, his two sons-in-law, as well as Lord Walsingham, who were all present, are still alive, and could contradict it, if not true.* Do the reviewers mean to doubt my having sent the first intelligence over to India of the peace of 1783; for not doing which, the late Lord Sydney, then secretary of state, narrowly escaped, as I know, being

called on to make his defence in the House of Peers? — Will these gentlemen venture to question my account of Sir Fletcher Norton's elevation to the peerage by Lord Rockingham; and of his kissing the king's hand at the queen's drawing room, on his being raised to that dignity? Which of the numerous particulars recounted, — of George the Third, of Lord North, or of Mr. Pitt, do they presume to deny? Is it the king's interview and conversation with Lord George Germain, previous to his being created a viscount; or is it the story of Sir Eyre Coote's red ribband, which covered Fox with no little ridicule, in November, 1783, just before the fall of the "*coalition*"? This Pyrrhonism is excessive. The most determined sceptic might believe *something*, out of such a mass of anecdote, between 1772 and 1784, as are contained in the "Historical Memoirs."

The contradictions and conflicting opinions of these "same learned Thebans," the eviewers, form not the least ridiculous rfeature of their criticisms; and prove that, though they have all been "screwed up to the sticking place," namely, *extinguishing the work*, yet they differ *toto cælo*, on the main points of their judgment. For instance, the "British Critic" says (page 27), "The materials of his *second* part are much superior to those of the *first*." Now hear the "Edinburgh Review" (page 188). — "On the whole, it must be owned that the part of the book which relates to the *continent* is much more tolerable than that which regards *England*." Again, upon the subject of Mr. Fox, the "Quarterly" and the "Edinburgh," are (as might indeed be expected), completely opposed to each other. The first of these worthy reviews says, "The friends of the late Mr. Fox will allege that Sir Nathaniel has been unjust to that eminent man: but *we* think that on this delicate subject, the opinion of Sir N. is not only sincere, but *justified by the circumstances of Mr. Fox's life*." After very warmly inveighing against that great statesman, for the mischief of his public conduct, and his sacrifices to ambition," they add, "we say nothing of his conduct in latter times. On that subject we confess we

* Since this answer was composed, I have lost the first and the last of those three old friends.

ourselves could scarcely write impartially. But, with regard to the transactions that Sir N. Wraxall relates, we must do him the justice to say, that we think his bias against the politics of Mr. Fox is not only *just* and *reasonable*, but that similar sentiments are common to the great majority of mankind." (See Quart. Review, pages 206 and 207.) These opinions are wormwood to the advocates of Fox, who indignantly exclaim, "To apply such language as Sir Nathaniel applies to Mr. Fox, is, indeed, to libel all his eminent contemporaries; and through them, the age and nation of which they were the ornaments." Their pious rage, excited by the comments which I have made upon their great idol, makes them strike at random, and heap upon me at once accusations of *sycophancy* and of *falsity*, blended with *rancour*, which entitle me at once to their *indignation* and their *contempt*. (See "Edinburgh Review," pages 204 — 206, and 207.) But it would lead me too far, if I were to attempt to point out the inconsistencies of men, who seem to be agreed only on one point, that of earning the reward of their virulent attack on the book, and on its author.

All the thunders of the Scottish vaticans are concentrated in their concluding sentence, which, though long, yet as containing the quintessence of their critical acumen, and displaying a specimen of impartial literary justice, I must transcribe. Speaking of the work before us, they say, "By the disgusting or indecent character of his private anecdotes; by his belief in stories which were always incredible; by his attempt to perpetuate weaknesses, which ought to be forgotten; by the shameless profligacy, or atrocious criminality of the acts, which he imputes coolly and groundlessly to public men, with no other distinction than that inspired by a pretty constant, though not a very judicious attention, to the wishes of the powerful; he has done his utmost to blacken the character of his age and country, to extinguish all confidence in political honesty, and thus to destroy that public esteem, which is the only outward reward of those who do not court royal favour." Why, what a nefarious book

must this be! It ought to be burnt by the common hangman, opposite the tolbooth of Edinburgh, under the immediate direction of the Scotch reviewers. habited as Spanish inquisitors. The "Essay on Woman" fell short of it in indecency. Aretine and Machiavel were not so subversive of public morality. Boccace, La Rochefoucault, or Brantome, could not compete in profligacy with such a work. John Knox himself, their countryman, in his holy rage against the whore of Babylon, against popery and monarchy, scarcely surpassed the virulence of these reviewers. Methinks I behold them, perched on the sacred mausoleum of David Hume, from the summit of the Carlton Hill, darting their *black* lightnings on my devoted head! I am nevertheless, I assure them, unappalled and undismayed. These are not the arrows of *Teucer*: they are the imbecile and harmless darts of *Priam*. "*Telum imbelles, sine ictu*," which inflict no wound, and leave no cicatrice. The rumbling of *their* thunder, only reminds us of the brazen-hoofed horses of Salmoneus, and never can imitate the bolts of Jove.

But, let me calmly ask these worthy guardians of the chastity and purity of the British press, what is their object in thus letting loose their rage on me? Is it in the hope or expectation of at once *putting down the book*, and extinguishing it under invectives? Do they fancy that the English people will give them credit for immaculate criticism, and for unbought censure? or do they consider themselves as the dictators of literature,

"Knights of the polar star, by learning placed,
To shine the cynosure of British taste?"

If these are their expectations, I trust they will be speedily undeceived, and they egregiously mistake the limits of their power.

"Non illis imperium calamo!"

Neither their praise nor their satire can operate beyond the moment, unless it be sustained by truth, candour, and impartiality. In the violent, as well as indecent attack which they have now made, we trace the inherent proof of

some foul interference. Else, how shall we account for the "Quarterly and Edinburgh Reviews" forming a literary *coalition*, like that so famous political union of 1783, which, as they may remember, covered both parties with disgrace and shame? It is time, however, that I should take final leave of these reviewers, which I do by parodying the words of *Stern*, addressed to the venerable doctors of the Sorbonne, when he hopes that they rested well after their consultation. I trust in like manner, that the conductors of the "Edinburgh Review" will receive from the public *the merited reward* of their

laborious and malevolent attack on a work, which, however great or numerous, as I admit, may be its defects, is characterized in every page by qualities vainly to be sought in *their* productions, namely, loyalty to the sovereign, detestation of French principles, abhorrence of Bonaparte and all his fallen Jacobin gang, attachment to the crown, and reverence for the British constitution.

N. WILLIAM WRAXALL.

Charlton, near Cheltenham,
Wednesday, 6th September, 1815.

A

SECOND ANSWER

TO

THE CALUMNIOUS ATTACKS OF THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW."

Paris, No 21, Quai Voltaire,
27th January, 1816.

WHEN I last answered the attack of the "Quarterly Review;"—for I held the "British Critic" in too much contempt too have ever given that publication any separate reply; nor should I probably have attempted to repel the calumnies of the "Quarterly Review," if the unprovoked and apparently inexplicable abuse directed against Sir John Macpherson had not roused me;—I confidently believed the editors of that review could never notice it. So strong is the internal evidence of the article "having been made *for* them, not *by* them;" and so palpably is the demonstration of this disgraceful fact impressed on every page, that its ostensible authors had no shelter from public shame except in silence. Hid, and in some measure lost in the immensity of the English metropolis; terrified at the idea of my *disclosing the means* which had been used to engage their services; and the name of the per-

son employed;—in the lapse of near five months, they have exhibited no sign of life. Not so the "Edinburgh Review." Though London might conceal the disgrace of the "Quarterly," no *wynde* of the "ancient capital" of Scotland could be found dark enough to shield from the sneers and contempt of their countrymen these *Munckhausens* of the North. We may easily perceive how they writhe and twist under the chastisement inflicted on them, and how deeply they feel the application of the "metaphors" which they affect to despise. Sir Fretful Plagiarist did not betray more distress, nor smile more ruefully, than does the "Idle Advocate," who, "generously extending his shield over his associates in humiliation, "throws away an hour" in exposing the errors of my work. In that short space of time he has, as he asserts, actually *written* an article containing above fourteen small, closely printed pages, nearly equalling in magnitude my "Answer," which certainly cost me

some days to compose: indeed, the article cannot be *perused* in an hour, nor *copied* in six hours. Why, his countryman, the "admirable Creighton," never wrote with such facility as this "Idle Advocate;" and Justus Lipsius's work, of which Tristram Shandy says, that "they should have wiped it up, and said no more about it," cannot be placed in any competition with the production before us. If, however, I cannot rival him in rapidity of composition, I trust that I shall exceed him in the more essential branches of solidity, truth, and every quality that can enforce conviction on an unprejudiced mind.

After this short exordium, I will endeavour, with all the brevity of which the subject is susceptible;—for, my first object is a wide circulation;—to answer pointedly the accusations and calumnies either repeated or invented in this "Edinburgh Review;" not even omitting the personalities, which, in violation of liberality or decency, have been introduced into it. And in order to fix the writer to his "charges," I will take the series as he has enumerated them, beginning with those to which he says "I have made no answer." They amount to six in number, if, after all, such allegations can deserve to be entitled *charges*, or are susceptible of any specific reply.

The first is, that "I impute cowardice to Louis the Sixteenth."

The second, that "I accuse Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Burke, of being ready to bring Lord North to the block."

The third, that "I accuse Lord North of having coalesced with Mr. Fox, from *prudential* motives."

The fourth (if it means any thing) arraigns me for attributing to Lord Thurlow the reply which he made to his majesty when the king entertained ideas of visiting his Hanoverian dominions.

The fifth and sixth form a complicated charge; namely, that I first "impute to the king duplicity to his ministers;" and next, that "I excuse or approve his conduct."

These heavy accusations, the "Idle Advocate" says, "are all passed over in profound and prudent silence." I will

endeavour at least to remove that ground of censure.

To the *first* charge, I reply that I never did impute *cowardice* to Louis the Sixteenth. I have indeed said that "his personal courage was problematical, and that he did not comport himself with the serenity and self-possession of Charles the First and Mary Queen of Scots, when laying down their heads on the block." But, so far have I been from endeavouring to prove that he was a coward, I add (after remarking on the nature of the guillotine, as "bereaving death of all its grace and dignity"), "I have likewise seen and read very strong attestations to the firmness displayed by the king of France in his last moments." Nay, I have produced one proof addressed to the Duke of Dorset, which declares that he died with the most heroic courage." His attempt to resist or impede the executioners," to which I allude, might, and probably did arise from other motives and feelings, than personal fear. Even Marie Antoinette turned pale at sight of the guillotine. And, after all, what sort of a charge is this? — The courage of Louis the Fifteenth, nay, of Louis the Fourteenth, was problematical. So was that of Charles the Second, and even of James the Second: while Charles the First and William the Third manifested the greatest intrepidity in the field. I retract not one word, nor recede from one expression that I have used, relative to Louis the Sixteenth. Let the Edinburgh reviewers make the most of it.

To the *second* charge I answer, that both *Fox* and *Burke* did many times menace Lord North with the scaffold, between 1779 and 1782. If any man can doubt it, he has only to read "Woodfall's Parliamentary Register." But I have nowhere said that Mr. *Pitt*, though he expressed his abhorrence of the American war, and of the administration who conducted it, threatened the first minister with the block. These Scotch reviewers mingle truth with falsehood; but it is easy to detect and expose their arts of deception.

I adhere to, and maintain the justice of every word or sentiment which constitutes the object of the *third* charge; namely, that "Lord North's junction with the party which had so long opposed him, has

always appeared to me to admit of much more palliation than the conduct of Fox and his adherents." These are my expressions, when speaking of the "coalition." Unquestionably, in my opinion, Lord North acted with *prudence*, in meeting Fox's overtures for a reconciliation and union. I do not say that he acted with magnanimity or elevation of mind.

Without being affected in the smallest degree by the comments of the Edinburgh reviewers, I believe on good authority, that Lord Thurlow made the answer to his majesty, commemorated in the present edition; which forms their *fourth* accusation.

I deny that I attribute to his majesty "duplicity towards his ministers." Let the world judge. My words are—"There were nevertheless, it must be admitted, *many individuals* who thought that the royal disapprobation should have been earlier signified; and who *inclined to accuse* the king of something like duplicity or deception, in his treatment of administration." But, I fully admit that his majesty's line of action is by me *exculpated* and *justified* for the reasons assigned; which conduct of the king I approve at this time, as much as I did in 1783. I think I cannot give a more specific answer to the *fifth* and *sixth* points. The reviewers must now confess that I do not "stand mute on my arraignment."

Having met and silenced these minor objects of impotent and malignant accusation, I come to the great charge respecting Dr. Musgrave's assertion, that "the Princess Dowager of Wales and Lord Bute received money from the French court, for aiding to effect the peace." The "Edinburgh Review," with that audacity which commonly accompanies, and sometimes shelters ignorance, rashly ventured in their *first* criticism on the "Memoirs," to say that the tale was patronized by no one, in or out of Parliament, with the single exception of the unscrupulous *Junius*." And now, when I have exposed their unacquaintance with Wilkes's Letter to the Electors of Aylesbury, as well as their inattention to the "North Briton," No. 45; what is their reply?—Do they venture to impugn or to deny those cor-

robations? No—they say, "we are disposed by *charity*, "to leave him undisputed possession of Wilkes's Address to the Electors of Aylesbury. It is absolutely *his best historical authority*."—What more authentic testimony or proof can well be produced in confirmation of any public fact, than a letter written by a member of the very Parliament accused by him of venality; dated in 1764, the year subsequent to the peace in question; addressed to his own constituents; printed and circulated at the time throughout the kingdom? Such a document outweighs twenty pages of vulgar abuse. The "Idle Advocate" would do well to remember that *charity* begins at home. He and his associates will stand in need of much indulgence for their deviations from liberality, truth, and decorum.

The public might with reason censure me, if I obtruded my own private affairs on their notice, while repelling the calumnies thrown on my literary character. Nor can it be necessary for me to give any answer to the scurrilous personalities which the reviewers obscurely sustain by allusions to "Benfield's Ledger," the "Memoirs of Ossian," or the stories of "six members of the House of Commons sent to that assembly, by the fair or fraudulent creditors of the nabob of the Carnatic." But, when they presume to assert, that "in a judicial examination" (no doubt, before the Carnatic commissioners,) "I *pretty intelligibly* assigned the interest of those creditors, as the motive of my vote against the "India Bill, on the 1st of December, 1783," the reviewers, or their informers, are guilty of a *gross violation of truth*. It is indeed the engine to which they systematically have recourse, and by which alone they can attempt to colour their next charge; namely, that when I say, "the consciousness of all India being subjected to the *rapacious hands* of Fox's adherents, by no means tended to tranquilize the public mind." I mean to throw a stigma on "the commissioners for Indian Affairs, Lord Fitzwilliam, the late Lord Dartmouth, the late Lord Guildford, and the late Lord Minto." Unfortunately for the Edinburgh reviewers, they have mistaken the *time* when my observation is made, which was

in *November, 1783*, whereas the commissioners above-mentioned were not then *in existence*; the "East India Bill" in which they were named, not having even passed the House of Commons before the 9th of *December*. It now remains therefore for these worthy and candid, but ignorant reviewers, to explain, how I could by possibility mean to assert or to imply, that commissioners who were not themselves yet appointed, had nevertheless already "promised or filled up "the first employments in India." My remark applies to the personal promises or engagements made by *administration*, previous to the passage of the "East India Bill" through the lower House. This impotent attempt to mislead, and to implicate the little passions of human nature in the cause of calumny, by naming four noblemen of high and unspotted character, as the objects of my animadversion, will only revert on its authors. The public mind will judge between them and me.

In the first criticism of my work, the reviewers accused me of "making Louis the 15th my *hero*," and of asserting that he "had covered himself with glory." When I exposed the falsehood of this imputation, by citations from the book itself, proving the direct contrary; instead of confessing their fault, and asking pardon for such shameful misrepresentation, what do they *now* say? — "We hurry over small matters. He said that Louis the 15th *had covered himself with glory*. This we thought the height of ridicule, till Sir N. employed two pages of what he calls his Answer to prove it,— which we think more ridiculous still." And is this their excuse for a wanton perversion of truth, when sitting in judgment on a literary work, after being exposed in all their deformity, as twisting every fact to their own purposes? With similar audacity they *invent*, where they cannot *find*, subject for accusation. I had already proved, by quoting my own words, that I never represented the King of Portugal "as a drunken old Moor." They now assert that I have said, "he had a face carbuncled by hard drinking." *Where, in what page*, are these words, or any synonymous expressions to be found? The facility which, *Hamlet* says, accompanies the act of violating truth,

may tempt these systematic *Munchausens* to have recourse to the expedient: but they may be assured it will eventually cover them with shame. Though slow, the verdict of the public will overtake them. My *erudition* informs me, and will prove to them before the close of 1816, that

"Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede *Pana* claudo."

But we come now to what they denominate "high matter:"—for these men see nothing in created nature so *high* as their idol. They employ two long pages in demanding proof that "Fox refused to lend any personal support to government during the riots of June, 1780, though Burke in the House of Commons loudly expressed his wish for unanimity." What proof would they have?—I was not then in parliament, myself, not having been elected till September of that year. I cannot therefore assert it from my own recollection. And if I could have done it they would have disputed my accuracy or veracity. The fact is now of near thirty-six years ago. Witnesses, therefore, such as the reviewers call for, are not to be found every day. But Burke's more pronounced and unequivocal support given to government on that trying occasion was matter of notoriety at the time. It grew out of the characters of the two individuals, which were most dissimilar, though then fighting under the same banner. I have remarked it, when delineating the character of Burke. Speaking of him and of Fox, I observe that "even in their nearest approximations, there were always essential and striking distinctions between the two opposition leaders." The case in question was one of them. In 1793 they diverged with inconceivable violence in opposite directions, never more to be reunited. And what was the *cause* of that separation? Was it not because Burke "lenthis personal support to government," against insurrection, jacobinism, regicide, and anarchy; all which Fox took under his protection, though he denominated them liberty? This is my answer to the reviewers.

They return the charge of my having, as they unfairly assert, declared that "Mr.

Fox's claims to office, were unsustained by moral qualities." I cannot more completely answer or refute that mis-statement, than I have already done in my last reply: a mis-statement "only calculated for low purposes of deception." The reviewers are pleased to denominate my justification "a hubble-bubble of words, with which they do not choose to encumber their pages." I adhere fully to my opinion of Mr. Fox, as contained in that "hubble-bubble of words;" and if they were his enlightened friends, instead of his servile admirers, they would be satisfied with the terms in which I have spoken of him. I have nothing to retract or alter in the character that I have drawn of Fox. It is impartial, just and candid; neither dictated by flattery, nor tainted in any feature by enmity. I respect myself too much, to lend my pen to the base degradation of party or to the vile arts of misrepresentation. The only recommendation of my work is its truth.

As little have I to retract any part of my remarks on General Fitzpatrick, and the explanation that I gave on the subject; except to put the reviewers right, when, with their accustomed regard to truth, they make me "*admit* that I might have erred" in supposing his mental powers to have sustained some diminution in brilliancy before his decease. I made no such *admission*. My words are, "*But, even on a supposition that I erred* in so imagining, how do I deserve to have it asserted, that I seek a disgraceful popularity, by exposing the decay of men of genius, to make sport for the rabble?" The reviewers ought to know that an hypothesis is not an admission. Every writer to the Signet can tell them that fact.

I leave the "*Idle Advocate*" and his associates to the undisturbed enjoyment of any triumph that they may decree to themselves, for their laboured hypercriticism on my explanation relative to the De Witts and Van Berkel. I hope it may console them for the mortifications to which they must submit from all those who appreciate the value of moral character.

There exists not the slightest contradiction between my assertion that "George the Second considered his son's recovery, if it should take place, as an object of the

utmost regret;" and his nevertheless communicating the intelligence of Frederic's decease to Lady Yarmouth, "without testifying either emotion or surprise." The reviewers affect to suppose, that a man may not regard an event as in itself, under certain points of view, rather beneficial than calamitous, without *eagerly* divulging, *as a piece of good news*," the accomplishment of that event: but, as I observed in my former answer, "the king did not disgrace himself before spectators, by displaying his satisfaction at the prince's decease."

If the Edinburgh reviewers display equal ignorance and incapacity in their *legal* characters, as advocates at the bar of the court of session, as they have demonstrated in their *literary* capacity, by their attacks on my work, their clients may be justly considered as objects of compassion. Never could this observation have been more forcibly exemplified than in their defence of the Earl of Shelburne. While relating the circumstances that accompanied his resignation as first minister, in February, 1783, I could not pass over in silence the injurious reports circulated relative to that nobleman; — reports which Mr. Pitt characterized in Parliament, as "the arts of defamation, adopted by Lord Shelburne's opponents, and as deserving his scorn:" — reports propagated by Fox's followers, and which were not long afterwards (as was commonly supposed), embodied, if I may use the expression, by General Burgoyne, in his comedy of "the Heiress," where not only "Allsrip" forms the principal character; but, as we all remember, the very *scenery* was rendered subservient to the same effect. I believe, if my memory does not fail me, General Fitzpatrick wrote the prologue to this dramatic piece, which was supported on the shoulders of *the party*.

Now let us see the justification of Lord Shelburne, set up by the reviewers. After their usual preface of invective against myself, for having presumed even to mention the existence of such reports, they add, speaking of me, "his logic is on a level with his morals. Because Mr. Burke and Mr. Lee perhaps abused the liberty of debate in 1782, in general invective against Lord Shelburne, this writer thinks himself at liberty to impute to

him, without proof, a particular crime of the basest character. They in all the intemperance of invective which the heat of debate may excuse, abstained from any allusion to a specific accusation. The natural inference is, that even in that heated and disturbed state of mind, they disbelieved all such accusations."

Who would not suppose, on reading this defence, that Fox's, Burke's, and Lee's speeches in the House of Commons, above alluded to, were made *subsequent* to the imputations thrown on Lord Shelburne? No doubt, the reviewers so thought, by producing them on the present occasion, as negative attestations in favour of that nobleman. And what will the world think of these ignorant advocates, when the truth is, that the three violent harangues in question were all pronounced between the 6th and 11th of July, 1782;—whereas the pretended purchases in the funds were not, and could not have been made before November or December, 1782, or January, 1783, previous to the conclusion of peace? So that Lord Shelburne's innocence is to result from the silence of his enemies respecting a fact which could not have been even contemplated by him, or by them, till several months after the speeches were delivered.

—"O medici, mediam pertundite venam!"

Unfortunate Lord Shelburne, to have met with such defenders! All the abuse which they heap on me is kindness, compared with such exculpation. Pope somewhere exclaims,

"Bless'd be the gods for what they took away,
And what they left me!"

I have only to hope from Providence, that whoever are my friends, the Edinburgh reviewers may always remain my enemies.

I now come to the "five Russian murders;" an article of accusation against me so prominent and so laboured in their *first* criticism on my Memoirs, on which the *present* article exhibits a new proof of shameless tergiversation. I will cite their own words, which must constitute the most severe chastisement, to men not lost to the value of character. Last Au-

gust, after enumerating "the deaths of the Emperor Peter, of Prince Ivan, of the supposed Princess Tarrakanoff, of the Grand Duchess the first wife of Paul, and that of the Princess of Wirtemberg," they add, "such a series of murders, including that of a husband, of a *boy* (which boy was twenty-four years old), and of three young women, one of whom was a daughter in law, has not been charged on any individual, at least in the modern history of Europe." And now what is their language?—"We were far from blaming him for having, in common with Europe, attributed to that princess a participation in the murders of her husband, of Ivan, and of the supposed Princess Tarrakanoff." By what logic will the reviewers reconcile these contradictions?

Relative to the death of the Grand Duchess, and that of the Princess of Wirtemberg, I have not a word to alter in my account of those events: but, when the reviewers add, "Count Woronzow offered, *as we read in the newspapers*, to desist from the persecution against our author, if the latter would name the agent of the court of Wirtemberg," I must flatly contradict this supposed fact, as *wholly destitute of truth, or of any foundation*. I have not the least reluctance or hesitation to repeat, as I now do for the third time in print, that I regret having very inadvertently mentioned Count Woronzow's name, in a manner painful or injurious to his feelings. But, the Duke de Sorrentino, of whom Lord Blaney expressed himself in the most severe terms, was contented to receive an apology from him, only a few weeks ago, in the court of King's Bench, upon Lord Blaney's expressing his concern and sorrow for the offence.

I have still to notice one more gross deviation from fact on the part of the reviewers:—a deviation which must have been intentional, unless they never read my "Answer" to their calumnies, which they so severely criticise. They asserted in their *first* review of my work, that "not a single anecdote contained in it, could be believed on my testimony." When I cited various specific facts, and called on them to contradict me if they dared; what is their reply?—"We only said that *we thought it safest* to believe

nothing, merely because he says it. And in this he evidently concurs: for, he in this very place enumerates the *few trustworthy passages* of his book, *which are all attested by other witnesses*, and may therefore undoubtedly be believed, notwithstanding the negative power of his testimony."—But, besides the *particular* circumstances to which I referred, I added, "which of the *numerous particulars* recounted of *George the Third*, of *Lord North*, or of *Mr. Pitt*, do they presume to deny?"—Here was a *sweeping* challenge thrown out to the reviewers, comprehending probably *four-score* or more anecdotes, scattered through the two volumes, *not attested by other witnesses*.—Really, the "Idle Advocate" and his associates must either hold the understanding of their readers in great contempt, or can set little value on the opinions of mankind, when they thus wantonly sacrifice truth, impartiality, and every quality that can render them estimable as men and as reviewers, to the gratification of unworthy feelings. Their conduct will carry with it its own punishment.

It cannot be expected that I should attempt to answer the vulgar reflections which they make on the *sale* of my work, when in one place they say, "It is no sort of wonder that with such allurements his sale should have rivalled that of the *Jockey Club*, or the *Crimes of Cabinets*:" while elsewhere they observe, alluding to the *number* sold, "In almost any former period, St. Giles's would have polled more than *two thousand*." They conclude with an epigram, which, though ascribed to a "young gentleman of Oxford," smells strongly of the *North Loch*. I have only one remark to make upon it, namely, that as it accuses me of *misdating* facts, I will venture to defy both *Oxford* and *Edinburgh*, though both are seats of learning, to point out *four* errors of that nature in my two volumes, which contain twelve hundred pages. Now here I have afforded subject at once of occupation and of triumph to the reviewers, if they mean or dare to abide by their own accusation. If they are silent, let them look to it. Guilt and shame find their only refuge in silence.

I have now answered every charge

made against me, without omitting, as far as I am able, even the slightest insinuation contained in the "Edinburgh Review." Those worthy gentlemen, towards the conclusion say, "We hope not again to be obliged to notice this writer. But we shall think "ourselves bound to *watch* him." As I have in this answer given them some subject on which to exercise their wholesome *vigilance*; after such a promise made to the public, there can be no doubt of our hearing again soon from them. Besides, since the eighteenth of June last, that day of humiliation and dismay to all worthy *Jacobins*, the Edinburgh reviewers have probably more leisure and less occupation for their precious time. I have been assured from respectable authority, that the *number* of their loyal *Review*, in which they did me the honour first to notice and to criticise my "Memoirs," was considerably delayed on account of the propriety and necessity of cancelling and finally suppressing a long elaborate article written in favour of the Corsico-imperial dynasty, which the unfortunate battle of Waterloo ruined for ever. In the preceding *number*, they had displayed their indecent joy and ridiculous logic, in favor of the ephemeral success of the Corsican; thus judiciously preparing the public mind, as they hoped, for his permanent resumption of power. But, as that "blessing of a better time," that "*Auspicium melioris Ævi*," to the unspeakable regret of all his faithful followers on both sides of the Tweed, is now removed to a rock in the other hemisphere; and as his Memoirs, which, we are told, he is composing, cannot be yet ready for the revision of his literary friends, I trust the Scottish reviewers will lower themselves to my level. If they do not, they will fall in the public estimation, even below the level of the writers of the "Quarterly Review," who never threatened to *watch* me. With the expression of this sentiment, and expecting to see it accomplished by the time I reach London, a few weeks hence, I take my leave, for the present, of the Edinburgh reviewers.

N. WILLM. WRAXALL.

HISTORICAL MEMOIRS

OF

MY OWN TIME.

PART THE FIRST.

HAVING long meditated to compose some account of the national events which I have witnessed during a part of my life, I have postponed the publication of the work, till nearly all those persons of whom I must have occasion to speak, were removed from the scene. In fact, with the exception of a very small number of individuals, respecting whom I have been silent; scarcely any of the leading characters now survive, who supported or opposed Lord North, the Marquis of Rockingham, the Earl of Shelburne, or the *coalition* administration. The lapse of more than thirty years has removed every objection of that nature; and the respect that I owe to myself, has impelled me to dismiss from my mind, before I undertook these Memoirs, every species of bias or partiality. Not that in point of fact, it is possible to speak of recent or contemporary events, as we would write of transactions that took place under Henry the Eighth; nor to contemplate Fox and Pitt with the degree of abstraction and composure, that we regard Marius and Sylla. Such philosophic superiority to passion, whatever pretensions to it may be set up, is not given to man.

Tacitus, who wrote of events recently performed, and who intended, as he himself assures us, if he should attain to old age, to compose the history of his own times; says, "*Dignitatem nostram a Vespasiano inchoatam, a Tito auctam, a*

Domitiano longius provectam, nunquam abnuerim: sed incorruptam fidem professis, nec amore quisquam, et sine odio dicendus est." If I might be allowed to parody the words of that historian, applying them to myself, I should say,—“That I consider George the Third, notwithstanding the many errors of his government, which were most conspicuous in the beginning of his reign, as one of the best princes who ever governed this country, I readily confess: neither will I deny that I cannot recall the idea of Lord North, unconnected with those engaging or elevated qualities of mind and of deportment, which conciliated the affection even of his opponents. Lastly, that Lord Sackville honoured me with his friendship, and showed me marks of confidence, I avow with pride and satisfaction. But, none of these circumstances would induce me to conceal or to misrepresent any fact, for the purpose of drawing a veil over their errors or political transgressions. I may further add, that never having held any employment, under any minister, at any period of my life, I neither can be accused of divulging official secrets; nor am I linked, in however humble a degree, with any of those ephemeral administrations, which took place with such rapidity between 1782 and 1784. I relate the events that I either witnessed, or of which I received the accounts from respectable testimony. How imperfect a light, these sources of

information enable me to throw on the period of time that I attempt to elucidate, I am fully aware: but, unfortunately, those individuals who, from their rank and situation, know most of the secrets of affairs, will generally divulge least; and even imperfect light is preferable to darkness.

I cannot indeed boast of having enjoyed the same advantage as Dr. *Burnet*, Bishop of Salisbury, who, in the "History of his Own Time," says, "I have had the honour to be admitted to much free conversation with five of our sovereigns, King Charles the Second, King James the Second, King William the Third, Queen Mary, and Queen Anne." But, between 1780 and 1794, during all which period I sat in parliament, I possessed many means and opportunities of knowing various facts, from high authority; and, in some instances, of ascertaining their secret causes or springs. Lord *Clarendon* and *Burnet* are almost the only persons of eminence among us, who have commemorated with ability, and at considerable length, the events of their own time. We cannot sufficiently regret that *Prior* did not live to accomplish the same task. That he meditated and intended it, is evident from the words of his epitaph in Westminster Abbey:—

*"Sui temporis Historiam meditantī,
Paulatim obrepens febris
Operis simul et vitæ, filium abruptit.
Sep. 18. An. Dom. 1721."*

The work which was actually published under that name in 1740, contained only some of the materials collected for it. If we consider the official or diplomatic situations that *Prior* occupied from 1690 down to 1714; and the intimate friendship in which he lived with Charles, Earl of Dorset, the Lord Treasurer Harley, and Lord Bolingbroke; we must admit that few men could have been more competent to elucidate the reigns of William the Third, and of Anne.

How much have we to lament that the late Mr. Fox, during his long exclusion from public employment, between 1790 and 1805, while in retirement at St. Anne's Hill, did not occupy himself in composing the history of his own time! Aspiring, as he did, not only to the

fame of a statesman and an orator, but to the praise of an historian; how infinitely more valuable a legacy might he have bequeathed to his countrymen, how much more durable a monument might he have erected to himself, by such an exertion of his talents, than he has done by exhausting his efforts on the reign of James the Second! Not that I would be understood to express any sentiment allied to disrespect, relative to the work which Lord Holland, with pious veneration for his uncle's memory, has given to the world. Every page of that short and unfinished production is worthy of its author, and raises him in my estimation. The "Introductory Chapter" can hardly be exceeded for profound reflection, elucidated by a severe and philosophic cast of thought; as well as by the most accurate and laborious disquisition of facts. Impartial, ardent for freedom, and indignant against tyrants, the writer is nevertheless exempt from the spirit of republicanism. The small portion of James's reign which follows, including Argyle's and Monmouth's invasions, may in a great measure be characterized by similar epithets; and excites regret, from presenting only a fragment. But if, instead of collating Rapin, Hume, and Burnet; or employing his time on the inspection of documents in the *Depot des Archives* at Paris; he had dedicated it to a delineation, however simple, of the great political scenes in which he had acted so distinguished a part; with what avidity should we not have perused the work! We might then have beheld as in a mirror, the secret history of the *Rockingham* and the *coalition* administrations, drawn by a master hand, which had propelled the ostensible ministers of the two periods. It was thus that Clarendon beguiled the hours of unmerited disgrace and exile, when he wrote his "History of the great Rebellion." The Cardinal de Retz, a man to whom Mr. Fox bore some analogy in certain features of his political life, of his character and fortune; made the best atonement to his country, and to posterity, for the irregularities and agitations which marked the zenith of his career, by tracing with his own hand, in his decline, the outline of those transactions which he had guided or produced. We forget his

deviations from prudence, his faction, and his ambition, in the elegance of his genius, and the ingenuous disclosure of his errors.

Perhaps no portion of time in the course of the two last centuries, offers, proportionably to its duration, so few of those interesting anecdotes where the sovereign comes personally forward to our inspection, as the reign of George the Third. The reason is obvious, and arose out of the king's character. Charles the Second and Lewis the Fourteenth, surrounded by mistresses, and all the dissipation of a court, presented to Burnet, to Grammont, or to Voltaire, perpetual matter of entertaining recital. Even George the First and Second offered some resources of a similar nature, to Lord Melcomb, for his "Diary;" and to Horace Walpole, for his "Reminiscences." But his present majesty's whole life, from the age of twenty-two, down to the lamented period at which he ceased to reign, was passed either in the severe and exemplary discharge of his *public* duties of every description; or in the bosom of his family, amidst *domestic* sources of amusement. In his agricultural occupations, or when engaged in the diversions of the field, he was only seen by a few individuals who from their official situations or dignity, had access to his person. No splendid assemblies of both sexes, or festive entertainments, to which beauty, rank and pleasure in a comprehensive sense, must have contributed; by levelling him in some measure with his guests, presented him to view, divested of the forms of royalty. Unlike his predecessor, who, even at an advanced age, still preserved a relish for those enjoyments; equally unlike his son, the present regent, whose graceful manners, dignified affability, and splendid taste, have rendered his palace the centre of pleasures; George the Third, while a young man, neither frequented masquerades, nor ever engaged at play, nor protracted the hours of convivial enjoyment, nor passed his evenings in society calculated to unbend his mind from the fatigues of business, and the vexation of state.

All the splendour of a court was laid aside, or only exhibited for a few hours on a birth-day. Rarely, during the first

twenty years after his accession, did he join in any scene of public amusement, if we except the diversion of the theatre. Still more rarely did he sit down at table with any of his courtiers or nobility. His repasts, private, short and temperate, never led to the slightest excess. Hence his enemies endeavoured to represent him, most unjustly, as affecting the state of an Asiatic prince; scarcely ever visible except on the terrace at Windsor, or in the circle at a levee. "Junius," who saw him through the most unfavourable medium, and who converted his very virtues into subjects of accusation, or of reproach; depicts St. James's as a court, "where prayers are morality, and kneeling is religion." It was not till a period later than the point of time at which these Memoirs stop, that the king began to mix in a select company, and occasionally to indulge in the pleasures of society. Previous to the year 1784, it is only in the foreign or domestic transactions of his reign, often only within the walls of one or of the other House of Parliament, that the materials can generally be found for writing the internal history of the time. These remarks, I am sensible, apply principally, though not exclusively, to the portion of the present work where the scene lies wholly in England; whereas the first part traverses the continent, through different countries, from Portugal round to Naples and Tuscany.

Soon after I had completed my twenty-first year, 1772, I went by sea over to Portugal; in the capital of which kingdom, or in its vicinity, I staid a considerable time. Joseph, son and successor of John the Fifth, then occupied the throne; but the kingdom was governed by the celebrated Count d'Ëyras, who had been recently created Marquis de Pombal. Few first ministers, during the course of the last century, displayed greater talent for administration, or exercised more unlimited authority. The king, though only one third in order of descent, was fourth in succession from the Duke of Braganza, denominated John the Fourth, who in 1640 recovered Portugal from the Spanish dominion; and at the time of which I speak, he had passed his fifty-seventh year. He was of a good stature, but inclined to corpulency: his features regular, his eyes

quick and lively, if a habit of holding his mouth somewhat open had not diminished the expression of intelligence which his countenance would otherwise have conveyed. In his cheeks he had a high scorbutic humour, attributed commonly to excesses of wine; though it might partly arise from violent exercise constantly taken under a burning sun. His face, indeed, was nearly as dusky as that of a Moor; and at Fez or Mequinez, habited in the Turkish dress, with a turban on his head, he might easily have passed for Muley Ismael, the sovereign of Morocco. Never had any Lusitanian peasant coarser and darker hands. One could not look at him, without recollecting how near are the shores, and how similar are the climates of Portugal and of Africa.

Two passions or pursuits, hunting and music, principally occupied his time, absorbed his thoughts, and divided his affections: nor was it easy to decide which of them possessed the strongest ascendant over him. In the former diversion he passed the far greater part of the day: to the latter amusement his evenings were principally or wholly dedicated, either in public, when at the opera: or in private with his family. No royal house in Europe was then so musical as that of Portugal. Joseph himself performed with considerable execution on the violin; and the three princesses, his daughters, all were proficient in a greater or in a less degree, on different instruments. If he was prevented by the weather from going out to the chase, the king had recourse for occupation to his Manege. On Sundays, he seldom or never missed attending the Italian opera at Lisbon; but he likewise maintained another opera at Belem, his residence near the capital. I have been present at this latter performance, to which only foreign ministers, officers, persons belonging to the court, and foreigners of condition were admitted; all of them gratuitously. The house itself was of very contracted dimensions; the pit not being calculated to contain more than about one hundred and thirty individuals. Boxes, indeed, in the proper acceptation of the term, there were none; the king, queen, and royal family, being seated in a gallery fronting the stage elevated considerably

above the body of the house. One small box was constructed on each side; that on the right hand being appropriated to the patriarch, or head of the Portuguese church, whom I have seen present at the performance. The other usually remained vacant, being reserved for any stranger of high rank who might visit Portugal.

The circumstances which distinguished this entertainment from any other of the same kind which I ever witnessed, and which may appear so extraordinary as hardly to obtain credit, consisted in the total exclusion of women, not only from the pit, but from the stage; either as spectators, or as actresses. No female could obtain admission. The reason commonly assigned by the court, for proscribing the whole sex from any participation in an amusement, of which, in all other European countries, they constitute the principal ornament and the soul; was, that there were no proper places for ladies. But, it might have been answered, that nothing could be easier than to construct side-boxes for their reception. Even this reason could not explain their exclusion from the stage, on which none except Italian *Castrati* were ever admitted to sing, or to perform any part. *Battistini*, who filled with great distinction the first female characters, was selected and engaged, not only for his superior vocal excellence, but for his feminine appearance and admirable resemblance to a woman, when he was dressed in female attire. So complete indeed was the deception, that I think it never would have occurred to any uninformed person, to doubt, for an instant, of his being what he personated. Even the *ballets* were all performed by men or boys, habited in the costume of nymphs, shepherdesses, and goddesses. This exclusion of all females, except the Queen and princesses, rendered the spectacle, though otherwise magnificent in machinery and decorations, as well as scientific in point of musical execution, comparatively insipid, dull, and destitute of interest or animation. Incredible as it may seem, the passion of jealousy constituted the cause of so singular a prohibition. The Queen of Portugal, though at this time she was considerably advanced towards her sixtieth year, yet

watched every motion of her husband, with all the vigilant anxiety of a young woman. And in order the better to secure his personal fidelity, she wisely took care to remove from before his eyes, as much as possible, every temptation to inconstancy. The ladies in waiting, and maids of honour, who attended their majesties in public, must certainly have been selected for their want of all attractions; and they were, besides, too far advanced in years, to be longer capable of inspiring any sentiment except respect. The Portuguese females who accompanied Catharine of Braganza in 1662, when she came over to England, in order to espouse Charles the Second; whose total deficiency in personal charms is so eloquently described in the "*Mémoires de Grammont*;" could not possibly exceed in that particular the attendants on Marianna Victoria, wife of Joseph the First.

Nor was her vigilance by any means confined to the opera. She displayed the same apprehensions, and took similar precautions, against any rival or intruder in the king's affections, whenever he went out to the chace. Whether the diversion was hunting, or shooting, or falconing, she was constantly at his side. No woman in Europe indeed rode bolder, or with more skill. Her figure almost defied the powers of description on these occasions. She sat astride, as was the universal custom in Portugal, and wore English leather breeches; frequently black; over which she threw a petticoat which did not always conceal her legs. A jacket of cloth, or of stuff, and a cocked hat, sometimes laced, at other times without ornament, completed the masculine singularity of her appearance. When, after having let loose the falcon, she followed him with her eye in his flight, she always threw the reins on her horse's neck; allowing him to carry her wherever he pleased, fearless of accidents. She was admitted to be an excellent shot, seldom missing the bird at which she fired, even when flying: but this diversion had nearly produced a most tragical result; as, a few years before I visited Portugal, she very narrowly missed killing the king with a ball, which actually grazed his temple. Few princes, in modern times, have had more hair-

breadth escapes from danger or assassination, than Joseph the First experienced; on which subject I shall have occasion to say much in the course of these observations.

In the year 1772, the court of Lisbon offered scarcely any sources of amusement to a foreigner. Neither levees, nor drawing-rooms were ever held, except on birth-days, and on a few particular festivals. The king, queen, his brother Don Pedro, his three daughters, and the young prince of Beyra, lived all under the same roof, and inhabited a long wooden range of apartments at Belem, lower down the bank of the Tagus than Lisbon. The terrors and recollection of the earthquake of 1755, were so deeply impressed on their minds, that they preferred residing in a wooden building, however mean in its fabrication, or inconvenient, rather than encounter the perils annexed to a stone edifice. Joseph had never slept under a house, properly so denominated, during near seventeen years. Wherever he moved, either wooden barracks or tents were provided for his accommodation. I have seen tents pitched for his reception in the fields adjoining the palace of Maffra, while that immense and costly edifice was totally abandoned, neglected, and unfurnished. These precautions, however singular, and almost pusillanimous, they may at first sight seem, were nevertheless necessary in Portugal. Experience had fully demonstrated, that the most solid, massy, and well-constructed buildings of stone, only exposed the inhabitant to greater, and more inevitable destruction, in the event of an earthquake; because the resistance made by such materials to the undulation or shock, produced their overthrow. On the contrary, any structure composed of wood, supported, like the barracks inhabited by the royal family, on pillars of the same materials; yielding to the concussion of the earth, rocked and waved with the convulsion, thus escaping its worst effects.

No splendour or exhibition of state was maintained by the King of Portugal, who, though he scarcely ever failed to attend, with the royal family, every week, at the bull feasts, and at the Italian opera in Lisbon, yet was always understood to be present incognito. The only devia-

tion from this practice or etiquette, took place when the court went annually, as was the invariable custom in time of carnival, about the middle of January, to the palace of *Salva Tierra*, situated several leagues higher up the *Tagus* than the metropolis. The king remained there till the month of March, and all the foreign ministers usually attended him. Hunting parties, to which strangers of condition were admitted, constituted the occupation of the day; followed in the evening by an opera, like that of *Belem*, open gratuitously to all such persons as had been presented to the sovereign. I was assured that *Joseph* expended no less a sum than forty thousand pounds sterling annually on the diversion of the opera. Yet he was likewise fond of play, and passed much time at the card table. Previous to the memorable earthquake of 1755, he was considered as temperate, drinking usually water at his meals: but, such was the effect produced on his mind, and so severe the dejection of spirits which he experienced, after that awful visitation of Providence, that it was apprehended his health would be seriously affected by it. His physicians prescribed the use of wine as necessary to restore his constitution; a prescription which proved so agreeable to the patient, that it was commonly believed, his majesty indulged himself too freely in its use. At an earlier period of his life, he was supposed to have been guilty of excesses of another kind, and to have given the queen frequent occasion for jealousy: nor had the partiality of *Joseph* towards the sex, by any means become extinct with the decline of years. But his attachment or amours were always secret, decorous, and conducted with a becoming regard to public opinion, as well as with a due attention to his domestic and conjugal felicity. No mistress, like *Madame de Pompadour*, or *Madame du Barry* in France, under *Louis the Fifteenth*; or *Madame Chevalier* at *Petersburgh*, under *Paul the First*, dishonoured and disgraced the court of Portugal.

Joseph, considered in his kingly character and capacity, though not to be ranked among the first princes in vigour and ability, who then reigned in Europe, was not deficient in talents or qualities

befitting the throne. If he felt his own inability to govern, he demonstrated no common discernment and force of mind, in the selection of a minister, to whom he delegated that office. The *Marquis de Pombal* exercised in fact, all the functions of the monarchy. He possessed nearly as unlimited an ascendant over his master, as the cardinal of *Lerma* did over *Philip the Third*, or the *Condé d'Olivarrez* over *Philip the Fourth*, king of Spain; and was accustomed to transact public business with his sovereign, at hours and seasons usually dedicated to pleasure or lost in sleep. The king very frequently signed papers of the greatest consequence after midnight, before he retired to rest; at which time the *marquis* commonly waited on him for the purpose. The hereditary superstition which characterized the house of *Braganza*, and in the practice of which *Joseph* himself had been educated; which distinguished his father *John the Fifth*, and which survived in the present reigning queen, till she became alienated in mind; by no means existed in him. The seizure and expulsion of the *Jesuits*, a measure of great energy, and not unaccompanied with danger, sufficiently manifested his superiority to the bigotted veneration felt for that order of men, among the majority of his subjects. If he possessed, himself, no taste for the fine arts, nor evinced any passion for learning and polite letters, he at least extended protection to their professors. During the period of two and twenty years that he had then reigned since the deceased of *John the Fifth*, a great and salutary change had taken place among the Portuguese in all the attainments of a civilized people. Establishments for the education of the young nobility and gentry had been founded, which would have done honour to Great Britain; and which, though originating with the minister, yet could only have been fully accomplished by the consent of the sovereign.

These laudable acts of government were nevertheless contrasted with corresponding defects of administration; some of which might be justly attributed to the *Marquis de Pombal*, while others seemed personally to reproach the king. The people universally and loudly complained of oppression. In the royal

household, mismanagement prevailed to such a degree, that almost all the domestic servants and menial attendants of the court, having been unpaid for several years, were in the lowest stage of distress. The reverse had been the case under his predecessor John the Fifth. Joseph's revenues were commonly supposed to amount to two millions sterling, while the national expenditure did not usually exceed a moiety of that sum. Yet the footmen who followed the royal carriages in public were left almost without the means of even procuring sustenance. I never saw the king and queen in any carriage, except a sort of caleche or chaise, drawn by two mules of no uncommon beauty. In this equipage, which was nothing less than royal, they always attended the bull feasts. When her majesty accompanied the princesses her daughters, to hear mass, or to perform her devotions, at some church in the vicinity of Lisbon, she was drawn in a coach, with only a pair of horses of a very inferior description, and such a sett of harness as we should scarcely consider to be good enough for a hackney coach. About forty horse-guards accompanied them, and they generally distribute some money to the populace or rather the beggars, who assemble in groups at the door of the church.

I went one day to look at the royal carriages, kept at Alcantara, about a mile out of Lisbon. There were at least thirty; some of which had cost, as the people assured me, two hundred thousand crusadoes, or twenty thousand pounds sterling. They were very magnificent, and had all been built either in Rome or at Paris. London had not then begun to supply the continent with that article of luxury. Among the royal carriages, I was struck with the coach in which John the Fourth made his public entry into the capital, after recovering Portugal from the Spaniards. It nearly realized the descriptions given us of those vehicles, soon after their first appearance or invention in the sixteenth century. The carriage in question, which had been constructed in 1641, was consequently above a hundred and thirty years old at the time when I saw it; and might more properly be denominated a chamber on wheels, than a coach in the

modern acceptation of the term, as it was capable of containing ten or twelve persons with the utmost convenience. The sides were open; the windows resembling the lattices of our farm-houses, divided into small panes, with casements for the admission of air. It was preserved with pious veneration, as a monument of the emancipation of the kingdom by the first prince of the house of Braganza. Henry the Fourth was seated in just such another coach when he was stabbed by Ravallac, in the year 1610, in the Rue de la Ferronnerie, at Paris.

Joseph the First had twice escaped from a similar fate to that of Henry: the first time, in 1758; and the last, only two years before I visited Lisbon. The former attempt, which occupies a memorable place among the tragical events of the eighteenth century, may rank with Damien's attempt on Louis the Fifteenth's life, in 1755; and with the attack made in 1771, on Stanislaus, King of Poland. I allude to the conspiracy of the Duke d'Aveiro, and the Marquis de Tavora, in 1758; all the leading particulars of which I have often heard recounted by contemporary witnesses. The Duke d'Aveiro, whose family name was Mascarenhas, descended from Don George, a natural son of John the Second, King of Portugal, one of the most illustrious princes who has reigned in modern ages; the contemporary of our Henry the Seventh; and to whose exertions we owe, in an eminent degree, the discovery of a passage to India, round the Cape of Good Hope. D'Aveiro's talents appear to have been very moderate, and his courage very equivocal: but, his temper, ferocious, as well as vindictive, rendered him capable of embracing the most flagitious measures for the gratification of his revenge. The King of Portugal's escape, which was altogether fortuitous, resulted from the coolness or presence of mind manifested by the coachman who drove the royal carriage. For, this man, finding that several shots or balls had passed through it behind, and not doubting that Joseph was wounded; instead of proceeding forward, immediately turned round his mules, and took the road that led to the house of the king's surgeon. By this sudden and unexpected manœuvre, Joseph avoided falling into the hands

of four other armed parties of conspirators, who were posted at different places, where it was known he must pass in his way to the palace.

A woman, the old Marchioness of Tavora, formed the soul of this sanguinary enterprise, which conducted the principal persons engaged in it to a cruel and ignominious death. Revenge, heightened by personal enmity towards the king and the first minister, who had refused to raise the Marquis of Tavora to the dignity of a duke; rather than any well ascertained intention, or expectation of subverting the government, and de-throning the Braganza family; seem to have stimulated the conspirators to so atrocious an undertaking. Precisely similar motives impelled the late Duke of Orleans to produce those commotions, which eventually overturned the French throne, and led to the horrors of the revolution. It was not, in the first instance, ambition, or the hope of reigning, so much as personal hatred and revenge. The late Duke of Dorset, who, from the situation that he occupied during several years, as ambassador to the court of Versailles, had opportunities of obtaining the most authentic information, has many times assured me of this fact. He knew it from Marie Antoinette herself. She constituted the principal object of the Duke of Orleans's detestation, whose malignity was not so much levelled against Louis the Sixteenth, as against the Queen. That princess had given him many causes of aversion; one of which consisted in endeavouring successfully to prevent the marriage of his daughter, Mademoiselle d'Orleans, with the Duke d'Angouleme. Marie Antoinette naturally wished to unite her own daughter in marriage with the young prince, as she thereby secured to her the succession to the throne of France, in case Louis the Sixteenth should not leave behind him any son. The Duke of Dorset told me, that, as early as 1786, or 1787, the Queen has said to him, on her seeing the Duke of Orleans at Versailles, "*Monsieur le Duc, regardez cet homme là. Il me déteste, et il a juré ma perte. Je la vois dans ses yeux, toutes les fois qu'il me fixe. Il ne sera jamais content, jusqu'à ce qu'il me voit étendue morte à ses pieds.*" He lived in fact to witness

her tragical end, but he survived her only a very short time. I return from this digression to the Portuguese conspirators. They executed their attempt, like men destitute of courage: for, if the first band, who intercepted the king on his return from Belem, had fired into the carriage as he advanced, instead of waiting, as they did, till he had passed, before they discharged their pieces, he must have fallen. The ball with which he was wounded, passed between his side and his arm, tearing the flesh of both, but without inflicting any severe wound.

The consternation excited by the attempt, was augmented by the obscurity in which it was studiously enveloped; the court remaining for some weeks in total ignorance of the authors of the conspiracy; as the conspirators did, on the other hand, in equal uncertainty respecting the nature and consequence of the king's wounds. It is a fact, that the Duke d'Aveiro and the Marquis of Tavora repaired almost daily to the king's apartment, to make their inquiries in person after his health, expressing the utmost abhorrence at the treason. They were even admitted to his presence; but in a chamber intentionally kept so dark as to render it impossible for them to ascertain the probability of his recovery. Meanwhile the vigilance of the Marquis de Pombal, aided, as is said, by some imprudent expressions of the Duke d'Aveiro, enabled the ministers to trace, and ascertain, the guilt of the conspirators. They were then arrested and brought to trial. The Duke d'Aveiro, the Marquis of Tavora, and his two sons, were broken on the wheel; while the old marchioness who, in consideration of her sex, was sentenced to be beheaded, ascended the scaffold with a firm step, betraying neither fear nor contrition, and laid down her head on the block, as she would have done on a pillow.

Haughty and imperious in her character, she was restrained by no considerations of pity or of humanity, when her vengeance, her ambition, or her interest impelled her. The meetings of the conspirators were frequently held in a summer house, situate in the garden of the Marquis of Tavora's palace at Lisbon, with which it was connected by a long

wooden gallery. It happened that a young Portuguese lady, of noble extraction, but of reduced circumstances, who lived in the marchioness's family, as her companion; surprised at observing lights one evening in this summer house, and although without suspicion of the cause was attracted by curiosity to approach the place. As she advanced along the gallery that led to it, she heard voices in earnest conversation; and on coming nearer, soon distinguished that of the marchioness, who seemed to be animated by some cause, to a pitch of uncommon violence. She listened for a few seconds; and then apprehensive of being discovered in such a situation, she was about to return from whence she came, when the door suddenly opening, the marchioness herself appeared. Their surprise was mutual; and the latter demanded, with much agitation, what cause had brought her to that place? She answered that her astonishment at observing lights in the summer house, had led her to ascertain the reason. "You have then, no doubt," said the marchioness, "overheard our conversation?" The young lady protested that she was perfectly ignorant of any part of it; and that as soon as she distinguished the marchioness's voice, her respect led her to return to the palace, which she was about to do at the moment when the door opened. But the marchioness, who had too much at stake to be so easily satisfied or deceived, assuming a tranquil air, and affecting to repose a confidence in her, "The marquis and I," rejoined she, "have had a serious and a violent quarrel, during the course of which, he had the rudeness to contradict me in the most insulting manner; and he even carried his audacity to such a point, as to give me the lie. I burst out of the room, unable to restrain my indignation, and no longer mistress of my emotions. Did you not hear him give me the lie at the time I opened the door?" "I did, madam," imprudently replied the unfortunate lady. Aware from that instant, that the nature of their meeting, and of the subjects agitated at it, was now in some measure discovered, she instantly determined to prevent the possibility of its being further divulged. Next morning, the body of the unfortunate listener was

found in one of the streets of Lisbon, wrapt in a sheet, scarcely cold, and the blood still oozing from various wounds inflicted on her with a dagger. It was universally believed at the time, that she had been put to death by secret directions issued from the palace of Tavara; but the power of that great family, and the frequency of similar spectacles in the Portuguese capital, silenced all judicial inquiry into the causes of her tragical end. The marchioness expiated her crime on the scaffold. Her daughter-in-law, the young marchioness of Tavara alone, who was daughter to the Duke d'Aveiro; exempted from the general destruction of her family, either on account of her presumed innocence, or as was pretended by others, from motives of private partiality on the part of the king, was immured in a convent. She was, I believe, still living in 1772, under confinement.

The second attempt made on Joseph's life, arose from the irritated feelings of a poor Portuguese peasant. This man, driven to despair by the conduct of the king's domestic servants, who had forcibly seized on his carts and cattle; rushed furiously on his majesty as he was going out to hunt, and aimed a blow with a long pole at his head, which narrowly missed him. It happened at the palace of Villa Viciosa, the ancient patrimonial residence of the Dukes of Braganza, where the king used sometimes to repair for a short time. The peasant was not executed, but still remained, as common rumour asserted, in a dungeon at Belem, when I was in Portugal. Two such attacks, though of very opposite kinds, yet had rendered Joseph timid, and induced him to take many precautions for his preservation against similar efforts of private vengeance, or of treason. Even at the Italian opera in Lisbon, which he scarcely ever failed to attend, yet when he went, as was his custom between the acts, from the royal box in front of the stage, to a side box, from which he viewed the *ballets*, he always passed through a close passage, well secured, constructed on purpose, with a view to protect his person from any act of violence.

Marianna Victoria, Queen of Portugal and wife of Joseph, was a daughter of Philip the Fifth, King of Spain, by Elizabeth Farnese, his second wife, heiress of

that celebrated family, and herself a woman of no ordinary talents. The princess in question had been, as is well known, betrothed, when a child, to Louis the Fifteenth; was sent to France, and resided in that country during several years: but on the death of the Regent Duke of Orleans, in December, 1723, when the government fell into the hands of the Duke de Bourbon; one of the earliest acts of his administration was to dissolve the unfinished marriage, and to send the princess back to Madrid. In the year 1729, when she was not more than eleven, she was carried by her father Philip, to Badajoz, and there married to Joseph, then hereditary Prince of Portugal, who himself had not attained his fourteenth year. The nuptials were immediately solemnized; the bride and bridegroom being put into the same bed together, in presence of the great officers of the court; but it was near six years afterwards, in December, 1734, before she brought into the world a daughter, the present queen

Marianna Victoria was said to have been very agreeable in her person, when young; but in 1772, no traces remained of that beauty. Her figure was short and thick, her face red, her nose large, and her manner destitute of softness or elegance. There was indeed nothing feminine in her appearance or demeanour. Nevertheless, her eyes, which were dark, lively and piercing, retained their original lustre. She wore a profusion of rouge; her neck and shoulders, whether at church, at the opera, or at a bull feast, being always bare; and she seemed to be not only in possession of health, but capable of supporting the roughest exercise, or most severe fatigue. Her arms were brown and sun-burnt, from her perpetually following the chase. Those persons who knew her majesty well, always assured me that she neither wanted spirit nor ability, though she never attempted to possess power, nor had ever attained any political influence. All her anxiety seemed to be confined to the person of her royal partner, and did not extend to the guidance of state affairs. If any opinion might be formed of her religion, from her behaviour at mass, she was assuredly no bigot. I was accustomed to frequent, from motives of curi-

osity, the church of the Necessidades, and that of St. Francisco da Paola, where she constantly attended, with the princesses, her daughters; and I may truly assert, that I never saw any woman who manifested so little attention while at her devotions.

Of a widely different character from her mother in that respect, was the Princess of Brazil, Maria, eldest of the three daughters of Joseph, and presumptive heiress to the crown of Portugal. In her, a gloomy and severe spirit of superstition formed the predominant feature. Her mind was said to be deeply impressed with the tragical catastrophe of the Duke d'Aveiro and his associates, whose fate she was believed to lament, as having been unmerited or unjust. To her reflections upon those terrible executions heightened by the remonstrances or reproaches of her confessor, has been indeed generally attributed the subsequent alienation of her understanding. In her person, she was taller than either of her sisters, as well as thinner; of a pale and wan complexion, that seemed to indicate melancholy; her features prominent, strong and altogether destitute of any attractions. In all the duties and departments of private life, she was exemplary. Married to her uncle, only brother to the king, they exhibited a model of nuptial felicity. The union, however repugnant to our modes of thinking, and in some measure contrary to nature, yet had been fruitful: they had then two sons and a daughter living. The desire of preventing any possibility of a disputed succession, between the collateral male heir to the throne, and the female in direct descent, dictated this species of incestuous marriage; which, whatever sanction it may derive from antiquity, among the Ptolemies, or the Seleucides, and even among the Cæsars, can plead no parallel among the other royal houses of modern Europe. It forms not the least singular circumstance of the transaction, that so far from any compulsion having been used to accomplish it, the princess, from her early youth, entertained a strong partiality and attachment towards Don Pedro, her future husband. She was near thirty-eight years old when I visited Portugal.

All the talents of the female part of

the Braganza family, were said to be concentrated in Donna Maria Anna, second of Joseph's daughters. Shorter and thicker in her person than the Princess of Brazil, she was more agreeable in her countenance; possessing a ruddy complexion, as well as a more animated expression of features. Her mind was likewise expanded, and her understanding cultivated by polite knowledge. Many of her hours were dedicated to reading, and she was regarded as superior to bigotry. In addition to these solid endowments, she joined great taste and skill in music, with a fine voice. Though the most accomplished of the three sisters, she was nevertheless doomed to remain unmarried in her father's court, having attained, in 1772, her thirty-sixth year. Nature had been in some respects more bountiful to the third princess, Donna Maria Benedicta, who was likewise considerably younger, being only six and twenty years old at this time. Though low in stature, clumsy, and much inclined to embonpoint, her face was very handsome, her eyes dark and eloquent, her complexion fair, the contour of her countenance rather round than oval, and her features small as well as delicate. But she was not considered to possess the superiority of mind that distinguished Maria Anna. About seven years before the time of which I speak, a treaty of marriage had been set on foot between this princess and the Emperor Joseph the Second, who was then recently become a widower, by the death of his first wife, a daughter of Don Philip, Duke of Parma. The negotiation proceeded so far, that preparations were made for transporting her from Lisbon to Flanders, in her way to Vienna; and a ship, constructed expressly for the purpose in the Brazils, magnificently decorated, lay ready in the Tagus. But the intrigues and exertions of the old Queen Dowager of Spain, mother of Charles the Third, and grandmother of the princess herself; who was incensed at the endeavours of the Marquis de Pombal, to assume the exclusive merit of this alliance, rendered the plan abortive.

It is probable, and I have been so assured at Vienna, that the pretext used to indispose the Austrian court from accom-

plishing the projected nuptials, was the representation made of the improbability of Maria Benedicta producing children, on account of her tendency to become large and corpulent in her person. Incredible and unnatural as the fact may seem, she was actually married several years afterwards, in 1777, when turned of thirty years of age, to her own nephew, her sister's son, the young Prince of Beyra, eventual heir to the throne of Portugal. The ceremony was performed in Joseph's apartments, as he lay expiring; and they lived together many years, but never had any issue. There seems to have been no rational excuse, or adequate motive assigned, for this second union in the same family, which impresses with a degree of horror, or at least of disgust; and was in itself the more remarkable, as the Portuguese women of condition seldom bear children if not married before twenty-eight or thirty years of age. Catherine of Portugal, daughter of John the Fourth, who was the wife of our Charles the Second, and who espoused him at an earlier age, I believe about twenty-four, never brought him any issue, male or female; but Burnet says, that the king himself told him (Dr. Burnet), that "she had been with child." She even once miscarried, when considerably advanced in her pregnancy, if we may believe the same historical authority; but as Charles had no fewer, it is asserted (I think by Dr. Lucas, in his history of England), than fifty-three natural children, by different mistresses, in the course of his life, we must suppose that his failure of legitimate issue originated on the side of his queen. Some excuse may be suggested for the marriage of the eldest daughter of Joseph, with his brother Don Pedro, where no direct male issue existed to inherit the crown; but it was reserved for the family of Braganza to exhibit to mankind, in the eighteenth century, the extraordinary spectacle of a youth of fifteen espousing his own aunt at thirty. From such a matrimonial connexion, it can neither excite surprise nor regret, that no descendants should have sprung.

The Prince of Beyra himself, eldest son of the Princess of Brazil and of Don Pedro, was then the *Marcellus* of Portugal; towards whom all eyes were turn-

ed, and from whose future auspicious government, political miracles were fondly anticipated. It may excite the more surprise that such expectations should have been entertained when I add, that in 1772, he had only completed the eleventh year of his age. I have seen him many times, as he never failed to attend the royal family in public, at the bull feasts, at church, and every where except at the Italian opera; a diversion for which he manifested a decided aversion. He was tall and manly for his age, though his face was pale and delicate; and he appeared to have a weak or defective sight. His features and his expression of countenance, it must be admitted, indicated intelligence. The stories related of his capacity and dawning expansion of mind, had obtained very universal credit. Some well attested instances of the goodness of his disposition and the liberality of his temper, I have heard, which seems to be entitled to belief: but no sort of inference as to his future character, could be safely drawn from these tales. Joseph the First, during the reign of his father, had excited similar expectations, which he had by no means fulfilled after he ascended the throne. His grandson, who was likewise named Joseph, died at about twenty-seven years of age, in 1788, of the small-pox, which the bigoted prejudices and ignorance of his mother, had prevented her from giving him by inoculation; leaving, as I before observed, no issue by his aunt to whom he had been married during several years.

With Don Pedro, father and great uncle to the Prince of Beyra, I shall conclude my remarks on the royal house of Portugal. He was several years younger than the king; but, not inclined, like Joseph, to corpulency; of a sallow complexion; equally destitute in his person, as in his manners and address, of elegance or grace; and no way distinguished by natural endowments of any kind. He excelled in no exercises of the body; and possessed in his features no expression of intellect. His faculties, which were indeed very contracted, rendered him altogether unfit for the conduct of public affairs. Possessing neither political power nor influence, he could only be considered as a fixture of the court;

and never was any prince a more perfect cypher. He enjoyed no command, military or civil; not even a separate establishment or household. When the king hunted, Don Pedro accompanied him, as he equally did to the opera, or to mass; never absenting himself except on account of indisposition. He had constructed a palace at Cayluze, about six English miles from Lisbon; but Don Pedro never resided there, though he frequently attended his brother to the chace; commonly alighting on those occasions for a few minutes, in order to hear mass at Cayluze. Those who knew him intimately, assured me that he was of a devout, friendly, and benevolent disposition. On Joseph's decease, in February, 1777, when his consort, the Princess of Brazil, became Queen in her own right, he was made king matrimonial, by the name of Don Pedro the Third; as Henry, Lord Darnley, became in Scotland, on his marriage with Mary Stuart. Don Pedro survived his elder brother above nine years, dying in May, 1786.

The public entertainment or exhibition which then distinguished Lisbon from all other capitals of Europe, was the celebration of bull feasts. They were held every Sunday, during the summer and autumn. I have been present at many of them. However barbarous the diversion might justly be esteemed, it is the only spectacle that I ever witnessed, which could be said to realize in some measure, the amphitheatrical games of ancient Rome, exhibited in the circus. They were already extinct in Spain, where Charles the Third had abolished them, on his ascending the throne in 1759. Joseph and the queen his wife, on the contrary, nourished the strongest partiality, or rather decided passion, for these games of Moresco origin; which they never failed to attend, unless prevented by illness. I have seen the king present there, though one of his eyes was swelled and bandaged; caused by the effect of a spark that had flown into it from the flint of his fowling piece, when firing it at the chace. Those persons who have formed their ideas of bull feasts, from the entertaining descriptions of the Countess d'Aulnoi, which she has enlivened by amorous, as well as by

tragic adventures; and which were written at Madrid, under the reign of Charles the Second, last prince of the Austrian line, in 1679 and 1680; would have esteemed the diversion tame, as it was exhibited at Lisbon, before Joseph the First. Yet was it not altogether divested of something that reminded me of the tournaments and exercises of chivalry, with which our imaginations are so warmly impressed in youth. The Portuguese bull feasts were celebrated in a large wooden amphitheatre, capable of commodiously containing many thousand persons; surrounded with benches below, to a considerable height, which were surmounted by tiers of boxes. The arena was very ample and spacious. When the champion, who was about to engage the bulls, gaily dressed, mounted on a spirited horse, a spear in his hand, appeared upon the ground, and saluted the corporation of Lisbon, as was the custom, the effect of the spectacle is not easy to describe in adequate terms. From sixteen to twenty bulls were regularly sacrificed every Sunday; and though circular pieces of leather were fastened on their horns, in order to prevent their ripping up or mortally wounding the combatants, yet I have witnessed many very severe and several nearly fatal accidents. Prodigious dexterity, vigour, and address, were displayed by some of the horsemen: particularly by a Castilian, who generally made his appearance, and whom I have often seen drive his spear, at the first thrust, direct into the bull's heart, when the animal was running furiously at him. The amphitheatre then rang with applauses.

It frequently happened that the bulls wanted spirit or inclination for the contest. In those cases, the spectacle became rather a butchery, than a combat, or an amusement: but, some of them would not have disgraced a Roman amphitheatre, if (as I have been assured was customary, a century earlier), their horns, instead of being blunted or covered, had been filed and sharpened to a point. Several of the men who fought on foot, exhibited extraordinary agility and coolness in eluding the rage of the incensed animal; but it must at the same time be remembered, that they were commonly six or seven combined, all

armed with long spears. I have seen women engage the bull, ride up, and wound him. Two in particular, who were *dancerinas*, or posture-girls; one, a Venetian, the other, a Spaniard, habited as men, and sitting astride, possessed great firmness, and excited general admiration. Sometimes the bulls were furnished by the court. I have beheld twenty killed in the course of three hours: eight of which were given by the king, as many more by Don Pedro his brother, two by the Duke de Cadaval, and two (however singular it may seem), by the patriarch of Lisbon. After having witnessed several of these exhibitions, I confess that I became disgusted with them. The most interesting part of the spectacle consisted in the assemblage of spectators, particularly ladies, who filled the boxes. Even the seats in the pit were generally crowded with females. The queen and her three daughters, never failed to attend in the royal box; though they were considered to be there incognito. However barbarous the diversion must be regarded, it always reminded me of Milton's description of the entertainments,

“Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold;
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize.”

As soon as the bull feast ended, which was commonly about six o'clock, the king, queen, and royal family immediately repaired to the Italian opera, which was situate at a very inconsiderable distance in the same quarter of Lisbon. Such was the invariable usage or etiquette every Sunday. Yet there, as at the bull feast, though seated in the front of the theatre, they were supposed to preserve their incognito. Joseph's dress on these occasions was always a full-trimmed suit of silk, or of cloth; either quite plain, or embroidered with white silk; the sumptuary laws of Portugal prohibiting embroidery of gold or silver. He wore a flowing tye-wig, as we see George the Second represented in all his portraits: and the Portuguese Order of *Christ*, across his breast. The queen and princesses were covered with diamonds; in particular, the Princess of Brazil: but the queen alone wore rouge,

from the use of which her daughters abstained. During the course of the performance, his majesty never failed to go round to his private box, close to the stage, in order to view the *ballets*, after each of which he returned to the royal family. On these little excursions, which he always seemed to enjoy, and during which he generally made the best use of his time, with his opera glass, in contemplating the female part of the audience who filled the side-boxes, several noblemen accompanied him. The Count de Prado alone possessed the privilege of being seated when attending the sovereign; a mark of distinguished regard and predilection. To him Joseph appeared to communicate all his confidential discourse, while the other individuals in attendance remained standing behind him. Even the Duke de Cadaval, though the sole person of that high rank in the kingdom of Portugal; there being no other since the extinction of the dukedom of Aveiro; yet was never permitted to sit down in company with the king. After the Count de Prado, the two Counts of Cantineida, and of Arcos, both sons of the Marquis de Marialva, whose name always brought Gil Blas before my imagination; enjoyed, in 1772, the highest place in Joseph's personal favour. The former, I mean the Count de Cantineida, was the only nobleman in the kingdom, allowed by a special grace of the crown, to drive in a coach and six, with which equipage the king himself had presented him.

The memorable earthquake of the first of November, 1755, had impressed on almost every part of Lisbon the most awful traces of its existence and ravages at the time when I visited that capital. Many edifices still remained exactly in the condition that they were left by it; presenting such scenes of devastation and destruction, as would then have been vainly sought for elsewhere in any part of Europe. Among them, the ancient palace of the dukes of Braganza, which was built on a commanding eminence, in the centre of the metropolis; and the cathedral of Lisbon stood conspicuous. Both these majestic structures hourly threatened to crush the tenant, or the devotee, who ventured to enter them. Yet the former pile was inhabited by

various families or individuals, who, pressed by necessity, sought shelter under the tottering roof; and superstition or devotion had consecrated chapels in the latter, amidst the ruins of altars and domes, where masses were daily celebrated. I was peculiarly led to visit the cathedral, by the hope of finding the tomb of Camöens, the celebrated Portuguese poet, whose body, as I had been assured, was there interred. But, I could discover no proofs of any such interment, though I made every inquiry; and I have reason to believe, after all the researches in my power, that as he unquestionably expired in a public hospital, of a disease which, from its contagious nature, resembled the plague, he was thrown into a common grave, with a number of other dead bodies. It is certain that no monument was ever erected to his memory.

A striking, and a melancholy conformity exists between the destiny of the two most illustrious men of genius, whom Spain and Portugal have produced in modern ages. I mean, Cervantès and Camöens: a conformity which reflects no honour on those countries, nor on the sovereigns and ministers who thus abandoned them to the rigors of adversity. Both served on the expeditions undertaken against the Mahometans, in the capacity of private soldiers; and both were wounded. Camöens lost an eye, before the town of Ceuta in Morocco; and Cervantès lost his left hand, at the celebrated naval battle of Lepanto, gained by Don John of Austria in 1571, over the Turks. Each of them underwent captivity, shipwreck, and all the calamities of adverse fortune. Returning to their native country, both were admired and deserted. John the Third and Sebastian, kings of Portugal, seem to have done as little to ameliorate the condition of Camöens, as Philip the Second and Third, the sovereigns of Spain, did for Cervantès. Each of them attained to an advanced age, amidst the pressure of diseases, penury, and privations. Camöens breathed his last at Lisbon, in 1579, at about sixty-two years of age, in an hospital; reproaching his countrymen, as is asserted, for their cruel neglect. Cervantès, extenuated by the progress of a dropsy, which was rendered more

severe by want, preserved his constitutional gaiety of disposition, down to the last moments of his existence; expired at the age of sixty-nine, it may be almost said, with the pen in his hand; and seemed to triumph over dissolution, by the elasticity and energy of his mind. He died at Madrid, in 1616; a year memorable in the annals of genius, as it likewise deprived the world of Shakspeare! The author of the "*Lusiad*," and the writer of "*Don Quixote*," were both thrown into the ground, without even the decencies of an ordinary funeral; nor can the spot where either of their remains are deposited, be even ascertained at the present time. It is impossible to consider these facts without emotions of mingled concern and indignation. Yet, Dante, Tasso, and Galileo, among the Italians; Spenser, Otway, and Chatterton, among us, appear to have experienced scarcely a milder fate.

If I could not discover the place of Camöens interment, I at least found out the grave and tombstone of the author of "*Tom Jones*." Fielding, who terminated his life, as is well known, at Lisbon, in 1754, of a complication of disorders, at little more than forty-seven years of age, lies buried in the cemetery appropriated to the English factory. I visited his grave, which was already nearly concealed by weeds and nettles. Though he did not suffer the extremity of distress, under which Camöens and Cervantes terminated their lives; yet his extravagance, a quality so commonly characteristic of men distinguished by talents, embittered the evening of his days. Fielding, Richardson, and Le Sage, seem to have attained the highest eminence in that seductive species of writing, unknown to antiquity, which we denominate *novels*. Crebillon, Marivaux, and Smollet, only occupy the second place. Voltaire and Rousseau, however beautiful may be their compositions in this line, are rather satirical or philosophical moralists, than writers of novels. "*Don Quixote*" is a work *sui generis*, and not amenable to ordinary rules. "*Gil Blas*" seems to stand alone, and will probably be read with avidity in every age and every country. Though the scene lies in Spain, and the characters are Spaniards, the manners are universal; and

are true to nature equally in Madrid, in Paris, or in London. Richardson and Fielding are more national, and cannot be read with the same delight on the banks of the Seine, or of the Tyber, as on those of the Thames; though the former writer transports us to Bologna, in his *Sir Charles Grandison*. Fielding never attempts to carry us out of England, and his actors are all Aborigines. Foreigners neither can taste his works, nor will he ever attain to the fame of Richardson, beyond the limits of his own country. *Clementina* and *Clarissa* will penetrate, where *Sophia Western* and *Parson Adams* never can be known or appreciated. *Joseph Andrews* and *Amelia* may be considered, in point of composition, to Fielding, what *Pamela* is to Richardson.

The late Alderman Cadell, who was one of the most intelligent, honourable, and superior men of his profession; told me that his predecessor, *Millar*, the bookseller, bought Fielding's *Amelia* of the author; giving him for the copy-right, eight hundred pounds; a great sum at that time. After making the purchase, Millar showed the manuscript to Sir Andrew Mitchell, who subsequently filled the post of British minister at Berlin: requesting to have his opinion of the work. Sir Andrew observed to him, that it bore the indelible marks of Fielding's genius, and was a fine performance; but, nevertheless, far beneath "*Tom Jones*;" finally advising him to get rid of it as soon as he could. *Millar* did not neglect the counsel, though he was too able a man to divulge the opinion delivered by his friend. On the contrary, at the first sale which he made to *the Trade*, he said, "Gentlemen, I have several works to put up, for which I shall be glad if you will bid: but, as to *Amelia*, every copy is already bespoke." This manœuvre had its effect. All the booksellers were anxious to get their names put down for copies of it, and the edition, though very large, was immediately sold.

All the most interesting particulars of the earthquake of 1755, have been recounted to me by many of those persons who shared in, and survived the horrors of that calamitous day, on which near forty thousand persons were believed to

have perished. They agreed, that if it had taken place in the middle of the night, when the fires were in general extinguished, and when the darkness would have prevented the greater part of the inhabitants from quitting their houses before day-break; not a fourth part of the lives would have been lost, nor destruction have followed. Prodigious numbers were swept off from the Quays, by the sudden rise of the Tagus; and the conflagration which succeeded the earthquake, spread even greater devastation than did that convulsion of nature. The first shock, which came on about forty minutes after nine in the morning, seemed to be horizontal in its direction or movement: but the second shock was perpendicular or vertical; throwing up the pavement of the streets to the height of forty and fifty feet into the air. Near an hour intervened between the two concussions. The king, queen, and royal family, by good fortune, were not at the palace in Lisbon, but at Belem, which stands near two miles lower down, on the same side of the river. As the apartments which they inhabited, were all built on the ground, his majesty leaped out of the window of his chamber into the garden, on first perceiving the shock; while the three princesses, his daughters, who were either not yet risen, or not dressed, followed him, wrapped in the bed-clothes.

Lisbon has, in all ages, been subject to the awful visitation and ravages of earthquakes. History commemorates several, during the lapse of the last six centuries, which have successively laid that capital in ruins, and buried or ingulphed a large part of the population. The most destructive earthquake known in modern times, previous to the year 1755, happened in February, 1522, soon after the decease of Emanuel, in the first year of the reign of his son, John the Third. The concussions of the earth then lasted during eight days; but do not appear to have produced a conflagration as ruinous or extensive as that which took place under Joseph; though more than fifteen hundred houses, besides churches, palaces, and public edifices, of every kind, were destroyed. Thirty thousand persons perished in Lisbon alone; while Santarem, Almerin, and

many other places, were swallowed up, together with their inhabitants. John the Third, his queen, and the royal family, were compelled to encamp in the fields, under tents, just as Joseph did in November, 1755. Great as these convulsions of nature were, they may nevertheless be esteemed slight, both in their extent and in their effects, if compared with those which desolated Calabria, in more recent periods, as late as the year 1783.

It is evident that the earthquake of 1755 ran in a kind of vein, principally ravaging a circle or space of about four to five miles; which was reduced to a state of desolation, by the fire that followed it. The "Alfama," or ancient Moorish city, situate higher up the river, as well as the suburb of Belem, extending lower down the Tagus; though both may be said to form a part of Lisbon, nearly as Wapping and Westminster constitute portions of London; yet received, comparatively, little injury. The principal edifices, and even the houses in both, remained, if not unshaken, yet undemolished. In 1772, rather more than half the space originally laid waste by the earthquake and fire, had been already rebuilt. Some of the new streets might even vie, in regularity and magnificence, with those of any capital in Europe; forming an astonishing contrast with the filth, antiquity, and barbarism, characteristic of the eastern extremity, or "Alfama."

The family of Braganza has not produced, even down to the present time, any sovereign endowed with talents such as distinguished the two kings, John the Second and Emanuel, who reigned over the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. John the Fourth himself, founder of the Braganza line, though he effected the recovery of their national independence, seemed to be in no degree qualified by nature for the performance of so perilous a task. Gustavus Vasa, who expelled the tyrant Christian the Second, from Sweden; Henry the Fourth, who crushed "the League" in France; William the First, and William the Third, princes of Orange, who successively liberated the Dutch; the former, from the yoke of Spain, and the latter, from the arms of Louis the XIVth:—all these were superior men, endowed with

energies such as Providence confers on heroes. But, the Duke of Braganza was an ordinary individual, whose abilities were of the most moderate description: even his personal courage was never proved in the field. It was the heroic spirit of his consort, which, supplying these defects, impelled him to seize the crown, which the weakness and incapacity of the Spanish government under Philip the Fourth, might be said to tender him. She was, herself, by birth a Spaniard, daughter of the Duke of Medina Sidonia: her name, Louisa de Guzman. After the decease of the king her husband in 1656, she continued to act as Regent. John the Fourth left two sons, the eldest of whom, Alphonso the Sixth, was only thirteen years of age. Labouring from his infancy under incurable maladies, or debilities of body and of mind, he appears to have been altogether unfit to exercise the duties or functions of sovereign power. While his mother held the reins of State, Alphonso's incapacity and acts of violence or of imbecility, were prevented from exciting any national commotions of a serious nature: but, after the retreat and decease of that illustrious princess in 1666, his deposition speedily followed. It was merited by his excesses and utter inaptitude for government. His own wife, a princess of the house of Nemours, descended from the dukes of Savoy, to whom he had been recently married, but, with whom he had never been able to consummate his nuptials; combining with Don Pedro, his younger brother, a prince of prudence, energy, and ability; arrested and deposed Alphonso. In performing this revolutionary act, they were only the agents and instruments of the nation, who unanimously demanded, sanctioned, and maintained it.

Don Pedro thus called to the supreme authority by the voice of the Portuguese, at twenty years of age, in 1668, did not however assume the title of king. Like the present prince regent of the same country, he contented himself with that denomination; but he married Mary of Nemours, his brother's wife, as Henry the Eighth of England had espoused Catherine of Arragon. Till the death of Alphonso, which took place seventeen years later, in 1683, Pedro only exercised

the regency. Alphonso was first sent to the Azores or Western Islands, situated in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean; where he resided for some years, at Terceira, in an honourable restraint: but it was afterwards judged expedient to conduct him back to Portugal, and to confine him in one of the royal palaces at Cintra; a village not remote from Lisbon, situate towards the mouth of the Tagus, in a country abounding with natural beauties of every kind, which render it one of the most delicious and enchanting spots in Europe. At a more recent period, Cintra has attained historical celebrity, from the convention there concluded, or rather at Torres Vedras, with the French, in 1808. In the palace at the former place, I visited the apartment in which Alphonso was imprisoned, and where he ended his days. Though become somewhat ruinous in 1772, it was tolerably spacious, being about twenty feet square, and proportionably lofty. He passed eleven years as a captive in that chamber. Towards the latter part of his life, his understanding, naturally very weak, became wholly alienated. He grew furious to such a degree, that it was found necessary to confine him by an iron rail, which surrounded his bed, and allowed him only a space of about fourteen to sixteen feet, for exercise. The bricks of which the floor was composed, where worn away in this track by the constant action of his feet. His death, however, as far as we can assert, or are warranted to conjecture, was not accelerated by any act of treachery or violence. It is an extraordinary circumstance that Alphonso terminated his unfortunate life on the 12th of December, 1683; and that his former wife, Mary of Nemours, who was married to his younger brother Don Pedro, died on the 17th of the same month and year, leaving no issue by that prince.

Pedro the Second, who continued to reign down to the commencement of the last century, in 1706; was unquestionably the most able of the sovereigns that have governed Portugal from 1640 down to the present time. John the Fifth, his son and successor, seems to have been a man of moderate intellectual endowments; fond of show, but destitute of taste; and during the latter years of his life, when the powers of his mind had

been enfeebled in consequence of an apoplectic stroke, — enslaved by bigotry. He expended forty-five millions of crusadoes, or nearly four millions sterling, in the erection of a palace at Maffra, about five leagues north of Cintra, and not far removed from the shores of the Atlantic. It formed a monument of royal prodigality, blended with superstition. Who can believe that in the last century, any prince would construct a residence in imitation or emulation of the *Escorial* of Philip the Second of Spain? John did not, indeed, like Philip, build the palace of Maffra, in the form of a grid-iron; but he united in one edifice, precisely as that king had done, a palace, a church, and a convent. The church occupied the centre of the building, contiguous to it being placed the cloisters, together with the cells, or apartments of the monks. Three hundred Franciscan Friars, a monastic order distinguished for the disgusting filth of their dress and appearance, were there stationed. They had even a hospital in the central part of the edifice, for the diseased and infirm members of the fraternity. One of the first acts of Joseph's reign, was to dislodge these religious nuisances; and when I visited Maffra, they had been replaced by secular priests, diminished in number. The palace, dismantled, forsaken, and forming altogether an appendage to the convent, extended in two wings on either side, and behind the church; but without gardens or pleasure grounds of any kind. Such was Maffra, the Versailles of Portugal; erected like that palace, in a situation little favoured by nature! John the Fifth expended more beneficially the treasures of the state, in constructing the aqueduct of Alcantra, scarcely a mile out of Lisbon, which supplies the capital in a great degree with water. In solidity and grandeur, it is a work worthy of ancient Rome; crossing a deep valley or ravine, from one mountain to another, on arches; the central arch of which range is three hundred feet in height, and ninety in breadth. The earthquake of 1755, spared this monument of national utility, which received little injury from the shock; and the construction of which reconciled me in some measure to the sovereign by whom it was raised.

The reign of Joseph may be more properly denominated the administration of the Condé de Oeyras, created afterwards Marquis de Pombal, than it can be characterized by any other description. The name of this minister was Sebastian Joseph Carvalho. His birth, noble, but not illustrious, would never have opened him a way to power, though aided by extraordinary talents, if court favour had not sustained and propelled them. Maria Anna of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Leopold the First, and Queen of John the Fifth, recommended him to her son Joseph; who, on his accession to the throne in 1750, named Carvalho, secretary for foreign affairs. His own abilities achieved the rest. On him, Joseph seems to have devolved the exclusive and absolute government of the state; nor was he unworthy of that selection. At the time that I saw him, he had attained his seventy-third year; but age appeared neither to have diminished the vigour, freshness, nor activity of his faculties. In his person he was very tall and slender; his face long, pale, meagre, and full of intelligence. He was so unpopular, and so many attempts had been made to assassinate him, that he never went out without guards. Even in the streets of Lisbon, his carriage was always accompanied or surrounded by a detachment of cavalry with their swords drawn for his protection. He was, indeed, not less odious to the nobility and clergy than to the people; and perhaps even more so; one of the great objects of his policy, during more than twenty years, having been to reduce the aristocratic and ecclesiastical privileges of every kind, to a strict dependance on the crown and government.

In 1772, the state prisons were crowded with unfortunate victims. The tower of Belem, the fort of the Bougie, situate at the mouth of the Tagus, and the castle of St. Julien, placed at the northern entrance of that river, were all full of prisoners; among whom, a great proportion had been Jesuits, arrested either in 1758, or in 1763, by orders of the first minister. The subterranean casemates of the castle of St. Julien contained above a hundred individuals, who could be clearly discerned by persons walking on the ramparts of the fortress, through the

iron gratings which admitted some light to those gloomy abodes. I have myself beheld many of them, at the depth of fifty or sixty feet below me, pacing to and fro; most of whom being Jesuits, were habited in the dress of the order. They excited great commiseration. The famous Gabriel Malagrida, an Italian Jesuit, who was accused of having, as confessor to the Marchioness of Tavora, known and encouraged her to make the attempt upon Joseph's life; after being long imprisoned in that fortress, was strangled, and his body subsequently reduced to ashes at the stake, in 1761. He appears to have been rather a visionary, and an imbecile fanatic, than a man of dangerous parts. His public execution, when near seventy-five years of age, must be considered as a cruel and odious act, which reflects disgrace on Joseph and on his ministers. Malagrida's name has become proverbial among us, to express duplicity; and has been applied, perhaps unjustly, to one of our greatest modern statesmen, by his political opponents. Many other persons of all ranks, either known or believed to have been implicated in the Duke d'Aveiro's conspiracy, remained in 1772 shut up in the various state prisons of Portugal. Most, or all of these unhappy sufferers, who survived, have, I believe, been since liberated in 1777, on the accession of the present queen.

In extenuation, if not in justification of the first minister, and of Joseph, it must however be admitted that the national character of the Portuguese, at once bigotted, sanguinary, and vindictive, demanded a severe government. They were neither to be reformed, enlightened nor coerced, by gentle and palliative remedies. At the decease of John the Fifth, the streets of Lisbon, even in the most frequented quarters, exhibited perpetual scenes of violence, and of murder during the night. Dead bodies, stabbed and covered with wounds, were left exposed in the squares and public places. But before 1772, the police, introduced and rigorously enforced by the Marquis de Pombal, had almost extinguished these enormities; and had rendered the capital nearly as secure as London. During my residence there of many weeks, such was the vigilance of the patrol,

that only one assassination was committed; and I have returned home alone, on foot, at the latest hours, without danger or apprehension. Nor were the cares of the first minister limited to the mere protection of the metropolis. Its re-edification, salubrity, and improvement in every sense, occupied his capacious mind. Lisbon might truly be said to rise from its ashes, as ancient Rome did under Augustus, renewed and beautified. The education of the young nobility, formed likewise, a distinguished object of his regard. A college founded solely for their benefit, at an immense expense, was already nearly completed. I visited it, as I did the manufactures of silk, of lace, of ivory, and many others, carrying on under his auspices. All these bespoke a great and elevated understanding, intent on ameliorating the order of things, and animated by very salutary or enlarged views. But the greater number of the Marquis de Pombal's institutions, edifices and fabrics, being incomplete, demanded time or funds for their entire accomplishment. The detestation in which he was held, impeded their progress: nor was it doubted, that as soon as the present queen, then Princess of Brazil, should succeed to the throne, her superstition or her prejudices, would overturn all that Joseph and his minister had done to introduce improvements or reforms into Portugal. The event justified this prediction.

Joseph's reign, which had been marked by earthquakes, conspiracies and war, was regarded by the Portuguese nation, not without some apparent reason, as a most calamitous period. Yet if we compare the misfortunes of that time with those which have succeeded, when the sovereign, the royal family, and the principal nobility, have been compelled to abandon their native country, in order to seek an asylum in South America; while the capital and the provinces have been occupied, over-run and plundered, by a revolutionary enemy of the most rapacious description; — how comparatively tolerable were the evils endured under Joseph, when placed near those to which Portugal has been subjected under his daughter! They may be said to have equalled, if they did not exceed, between 1807 and 1810, the degradation and sub-

version which followed the death of Sebastian, in the sixteenth century, when Philip the Second rendered himself master of the kingdom. Having mentioned Sebastian, I shall say a few words on the history of that unfortunate prince. It is well known that he perished or disappeared in the famous battle of Arzila, on the coast of Barbary, fought on the 4th of August, 1578. I have seen in the royal palace at Cintra, a little open court or balcony, adjoining one of the rooms of state, in which was constructed a stone chair or seat, coated with a sort of a coarse porcelain; a bench of the same materials extending on each side. In that chair, while his ministers sat round him, Sebastian, as constant tradition asserts, held the memorable council in which the enterprise against Morocco was resolved on, contrary to the advice and opinions of his more prudent counsellors. That he was no more seen after the day of the battle of Arzila, by the Portuguese, is certain; but it is not absolutely ascertained beyond all doubt, that he perished there. His body was never found, or at least, was never identified; and I have conversed with very judicious men at Lisbon, who inclined to believe that the individual who appeared at Venice in 1598, asserting himself to be Sebastian, was really that prince.

Joseph had one sister, named Barbara, who was married, at seventeen years of age, to Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias, youngest of the sons of Philip the Fifth, King of Spain, by his first queen, and who afterwards succeeded him in the Spanish throne. This princess, who seems to have been entirely under the dominion of superstition and of music; before she quitted Lisbon, in order to become the wife of Ferdinand, in 1729, having repaired to the church of the "Madrè de Dios," or Mother of God, situate on the banks of the Tagus in the suburbs; there made a solemn offering to the Virgin, of the rich dress, laces, and valuable jewels, which she had worn at the ceremony of her espousals. I was induced to visit the church, for the purpose of viewing this magnificent sacrifice or renunciation of female ornament. The image was habited from head to foot, in the finest lace; the stomacher, necklace, and ear-rings, being altogether composed

of brilliants. Lady Wortley Montagu remarks, in one of her letters, written from some part of Germany; I believe, from Cologne; that in her time, as early as 1717, or 1718, the knavery of the priests had already removed, in most, or in many of the Catholic churches, the precious stones which devotees had presented to the saints; substituting paste, or other imitations in their place. This assertion may have been well founded, relative to Germany; but was not true in Portugal, at a much later period. I viewed these diamonds, by permission of the priests, very closely, through the medium of a glass case, in which the Virgin herself was inclosed; and I have not the slightest doubt that they were the identical jewels, presented by the princess on the above-mentioned occasion. At the feet of his Mother, secured within the same case, lay a waxen figure of the infant Jesus, wrapt in similar attire, and reposing in a cradle of solid silver. How long these costly articles of dress may have remained unremoved in the church of the "Madrè de Dios," since I saw them, I cannot pretend to say: but we may presume that the Prince Regent, when he embarked for Rio Janeiro, did not leave them behind, for the Duchess of Abrantès, or the revolutionary rapacity of the French generals; who would no more have spared them than the elder Dionysius respected the golden beard of Esculapius, or the mantle of Jupiter.

The princess Barbara, who became Queen of Spain in 1746, constituted the supreme felicity of Ferdinand the Sixth, her husband; with whom she lived twenty-nine years, in a state of such conjugal union as is rarely to be found in human life, and still more rarely on the throne. They nevertheless remained without issue. Like his queen, Ferdinand nourished a decided passion, or rather rage, for music; and it is well known that the celebrated Farinelli enjoyed under his reign, as he had previously done under that of Philip the Fifth, an almost unbounded ascendancy over both the king and queen. Such was Farinelli's prodigious influence, that he may be said to have shared the political power of the state with Ensenada, the first minister of Ferdinand; a prince who, though he reigned in our own times, is

hardly known or remembered beyond the limits of Spain. His talents were very confined, but his intentions were upright. Notwithstanding the obligations of the "family compact," he refused, on the commencement of the war between Great Britain and France in 1756, to join the latter power; or to sacrifice, as his successor Charles the Third did in 1761, the interests of his people, to the ties of consanguinity existing between him and Louis the Fifteenth. Till his decease, which took place in 1759, Ferdinand maintained a strict neutrality. His death was unquestionably produced by grief for the loss of his queen, who had been carried off in the preceding year. From that time, Ferdinand became a prey to the most inveterate melancholy, which not only enfeebled, but in some measure alienated his mind. Abandoning himself to despair, he declined all society; refused to change his linen, or to take any remedies, during some weeks before he expired; and ultimately died the victim of conjugal affection. In consequence of this event, his half-brother, Charles, son of Philip the Fifth by his second wife, the *Parmesana* as she was denominated; who then reigned at Naples, ascended the throne of Spain.

I passed a great part of the years 1775 and 1776 in France, not long after the decease of Louis the Fifteenth; a sovereign whose character and actions always appeared to me to be depreciated and undervalued by the French, nearly in the same proportion that they have elevated those of Louis the Fourteenth above their just standard. Like his predecessor, he succeeded to the crown while in childhood; but, he had not the same advantages as Louis the Fourteenth enjoyed, whose mother, Anne of Austria, watched with maternal solicitude over his preservation. Louis the Fifteenth, who at five years of age survived both his parents, was left, during the regency of Philip, Duke of Orleans, principally to the care of Fleury, Bishop of Frejus, who obtained over his pupil an early and almost an unbounded ascendancy. The regency lasted above eight years; and during no period of time since the abdication of James the Second in 1689, have France and England been so closely united by political ties. George the First and the regent

duke, both, dreaded a pretender: one, in the son of James; the other, in Philip the Fifth, King of Spain. Impelled by this apprehension, the two princes equally made the policy and interests of their respective countries subordinate to their personal objects of acquisition or ambition. Philip, Duke of Orleans, was undoubtedly one of the most immoral and profligate men whom we have beheld in modern ages. The orgies of the "palais royal," probably exceeded in depravity, as well as in enormity, every thing of the same kind ever acted, even in France. The incestuous fables of antiquity, and the unnatural amours of Cinyras and Myrrha, which we read with horror in Ovid; the revolting stories related of Alexander the Sixth and his daughter Lucretia Borgia;—were believed to have been realized in the persons of the Duchess de Berri and the Abbess de Chelles, with their own father. But, notwithstanding the disgust excited by such scenes of infamous turpitude, we must acknowledge that the regent likewise displayed some of the greatest endowments and talents, fitted both for the cabinet and for the field. His descendant, who performed so detestable a part in the late French revolution, only resembled him in his vices. He inherited neither the distinguished personal courage, nor the ardour for knowledge, nor the military skill, nor the aptitude for public business, nor the elevated mind of the regent; who, if he had not been restrained by some considerations of goodness, or some emotions of affection, might easily have acted by Louis the Fifteenth, as we suppose that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, did by Edward the Fifth; or, as we know that the late Duke of Orleans acted by Louis the Sixteenth and his queen. To the regent, whose life was terminated before the end of the year 1723, in the arms of the Duchess de Valori, abbreviated by his excesses, succeeded the short and feeble ministry of the Duke of Bourbon, comprising scarcely three years; but, which period of time produced one event peculiarly interesting to the young king and to France; I mean, his marriage.

There is no instance in the last, or present century, of any female attaining

so high an elevation as that of Mademoiselle de Leczinska to the throne of France: for we cannot justly reckon the second marriage of the Czar Peter, with Catherine, the Livonian peasant, as an exception. Muscovy could scarcely then be considered as forming a portion of the European system, nor were its sovereigns altogether subjected to our usages. That the daughter of an expatriated Polish nobleman or palatine, whom Charles the Twelfth of Sweden had nominally forced upon the Poles, as their king, during a few years; but who was in fact only a needy exiled adventurer, driven by necessity to take shelter in an obscure provincial town of Alsace, and destitute of territories, or almost of support;—that a princess, if such she might indeed be properly denominated, who could hardly be thought a suitable match for one of the petty sovereigns on the banks of the Elbe, or the Rhine, should have been selected for the consort of the King of France, may assuredly be considered as one of the most singular caprices of fortune. Its singularity becomes augmented, when we reflect that the young monarch was already not only betrothed to the daughter of Philip the Fifth, his uncle, King of Spain; but that the princess designed to share his throne and bed, had long resided in France, the nuptials being only delayed till the two parties should attain a proper age. Yet in defiance of this impediment, did the Duke of Bourbon venture to send back Philip's daughter to Madrid; and I met her at Lisbon near half a century afterwards, become queen of Portugal; transported from the banks of the Seine to those of the Tagus: while a native of Poland, brought up in obscurity, and hardly accounted among the female candidates for an European crown, supplied her place. The motive assigned for so extraordinary a proceeding on the part of the Duke of Bourbon, was his apprehension that the young king, whose delicate constitution seemed scarcely to promise his attaining to manhood, should die without issue.

I have been assured by persons conversant in the secret history of the early part of Louis the Fifteenth's reign, that when the Duke of Bourbon determined on dissolving the unconsummated mar-

riage between the young king and Philip's daughter, he found himself under the greatest embarrassment whom to substitute in her room. He had a sister, Mademoiselle de Sens, born in 1705, whose age and personal accomplishments rendered her a fit bride for Louis. She then resided at the Abbey of Fontevraud in Anjou, under the protection of the abbess; and it was natural for the duke to desire to raise her to the throne. But he was himself enslaved to the celebrated Marchioness de Prie, his mistress, who wished to have the merit of naming the future queen; in whose household, and about whose person, she aspired to occupy a distinguished situation. On the other hand, they both equally dreaded giving a wife to their sovereign, whose charms, talents or ambition, might impel her to assume an empire over his mind. Louis, then only entering on his sixteenth year, brought up in great seclusion, scarcely initiated in public business; and though not destitute of talents, yet indolent, of very reserved habits, modest, and diffident of himself; would, not improbably, like his uncle Philip the Fifth, be governed by a queen of energy and spirit. Before the choice fell therefore on the Duke of Bourbon's sister, it behoved the marchioness to ascertain whether, if selected for so great an elevation, she would probably manifest ductility of character, gratitude and attachment towards the person who principally raised her to that eminence. In order to obtain satisfaction on a point so important, Madame de Prie determined to procure an interview with Mademoiselle de Sens, to whom she was unknown by person, though not by reputation. Assuming therefore a fictitious name, she repaired to Fontevraud, and having been presented to her, found means to turn the conversation on the Marchioness de Prie. Unconscious that the stranger to whom she addressed her discourse, was the marchioness herself, the princess gave full scope to her antipathy towards a woman, whom she considered as exercising a pernicious influence over her brother's mind. This disclosure of her sentiments, at once stopped the further prosecution of Madame de Prie's plan for placing her on the French throne, and compelled her to turn her views to another quarter.

The Duke of Bourbon, not discouraged by the obstacle which difference of religion imposed, next embraced the extraordinary measure of demanding for his master the hand of an English princess; and he named as the object of his selection, the eldest granddaughter of George the First, Anne, who afterwards married William the Fourth, Prince of Orange. This event took place in 1725. However strong might be the objection arising from her profession of the protestant faith, which she must necessarily have renounced, in order to ascend the throne of France, yet the offer was alluring; and Henrietta, sister of Charles the Second, had married Philip, Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis the Fourteenth, after Charles's restoration. But George the First, though gratified by the proposition of seeing one of his female descendants wear the French crown, yet was too wise to accept it; well knowing that such an alliance, however splendid in itself, or whatever political advantages it might seem to present, would irritate and disgust all the adherents of the succession in the house of Hanover. Thus foiled in two attempts to dispose of Louis the Fifteenth's hand, and firmly resolved on effecting his marriage without delay, Madame de Prie cast her eyes on Maria Leczinska, the daughter of Stanislaus. She was then living with her father, at Weissembourg in Alsace; a town situate not far from the Rhine, on the frontier of Germany, though in the dominions of France; where the titular king of Poland resided in as much obscurity, as Charles, the Second lived in the preceding century at Cologne, during the protectorate of Cromwell. So little expectation did he entertain of matching his daughter with a crowned head, that he had already lent a favourable ear to the proposals of a private nobleman, a subject of France, the Count d'Estrees, who offered her marriage. Stanislaus accepted the offer, but desired to delay its accomplishment, till he could procure, if possible, the honours of a duchess, at the court of Versailles, for Mademoiselle de Leczinska.

With that view he actually made application to obtain a brevet of duke for the Count d'Estrees, his destined son-in-law, though without success; fortune

reserved for her the first diadem in Europe. Her principal recommendation consisted in her want of personal attractions, the humility of her condition, and the obligation to gratitude which she must naturally feel for the authors of so wonderful a change in her fortune. In fact, nature had neither bestowed on her beauty, elegance of manners, nor intellectual endowments of any kind. Even youth she could scarcely be said comparatively to possess, as she was already twenty-three years of age, while her destined husband was only sixteen. We know not which to admire most, the singularity of such a choice, or the passive apathy displayed by Louis, while his minister and Madame de Prie thus disposed of his person. Maria Leczinska brought him nothing as a portion, on the day of her nuptials, except modesty, virtue, and goodness of heart. Yet the young king, during eleven or twelve years after his marriage, exhibited a pattern of conjugal fidelity, which stands strongly contrasted with Louis the Fourteenth's dissolute amours, at the same period of life; though Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip the Fourth, could boast of much superior personal charms to the Polish princess. The Duchess de la Valiere, Madame de Montespan, and Madame de Fontanges, disputed for the possession of Louis the Fourteenth's youth. It was not till Louis the Fifteenth had passed his thirtieth year, that after becoming successively enamoured of the Duchess de Chateau-roux and her two sisters, he sunk first into the arms of the Marchioness de Pompadour, and in his old age resigned himself to the disgraceful chains of the Countess du Barry.

The Duke de Bourbon's and Madame de Prie's period of power, proved nevertheless of short duration. He was banished in 1726, to Chantilly, and at that point of time commences Cardinal Fleury's administration. It lasted nearly as long as Richlieu's ministry had done; namely, about seventeen years; and though Fleury was far inferior in strength of character, resources and energy, to his great predecessor, yet may France justly feel for him equal gratitude. Pacific, economical, unostentatious, and mild, he seemed made to heal the wounds inflicted on their country, by the ambition of

Louis the Fourteenth, and the excesses of the regent. If Richlieu, as we are assured from contemporary authority, ventured to raise his eyes to Anne of Austria, and to make her propositions of a libertine nature, it is equally a fact, however incredible it may appear, that Fleury, then above seventy years of age, carried his presumption still farther with respect to Maria Leczinska. That princess, conscious nevertheless of the ascendant which the cardinal had obtained over her husband, possessed too much prudence to communicate to him, in the first instance, the subject of her complaint. She wisely preferred making a confidant of her father. To Stanislaus she therefore revealed the temerity of the aged minister, and besought him to give her his advice for her conduct, particularly on the propriety of her acquainting Louis with the circumstance. Stanislaus exhorted her in reply, to bury the secret in her own bosom; observing at the same time, that sovereign princesses are placed on such an eminence, as almost to render it impossible for any disrespectful propositions to be made them, unless they encourage, to a certain degree, such advances. The queen was discreet enough to adopt this judicial and parental counsel. If I had not received the anecdote here related, from a person whose intimacy with the individuals composing the court of France at that time, joined to his rank and high character, left no doubt of its authenticity, I should not venture to recount the fact.

To Louis the Fifteenth, France stands indebted for the acquisition of Lorraine, a territory of inestimable value; perhaps surpassing in real importance any augmentation of the French dominions made by arms within the three last centuries. Henry the Second had conquered Metz, Toul, and Verdun, from the German empire; besides re-annexing Calais, so long held by the English princes. The counties of Bugey and Bresse, covering the borders on the side of Savoy, were gained by Henry the Fourth. His son, Louis the Thirteenth, or more properly to speak, the Cardinal de Richlieu, added Rousillon and Cerdagne, situate at one extremity of the kingdom, towards Catalonia; while in another quarter, he reduced Artois and Alsace to the French obedience. Lastly, Louis the Fourteenth

in the course of his long, ambitious, and sanguinary career, exceeding in duration seventy years, not only enlarged or strengthened his frontier along the Rhine; but augmented his territories by the addition of Franche Comté, and of a vast portion of Flanders. Yet may we justly doubt whether any of these acquisitions conferred such strength and security as the possession of Lorraine. When we reflect on the beauty and extent of that fine province, stretching into the midst of France; contiguous on the east to Germany, while on the west its limits approached Paris itself;—we must own that the French seem ungrateful to the memory of a prince, who by his arms and negotiations succeeded in retaining such a tract of country. It affixed the seal to every preceding effort made by their kings or ministers, for the security, greatness and protection of France; leaving unaccomplished no object of wise ambition. Nor can we too severely censure the inert, or parsimonious and narrow policy of Walpole, in permitting Cardinal Fleury to illustrate his administration by such an act. France did not, indeed, instantly take possession in her own name, of the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar. Fortune, after raising Maria Leczinska to the throne of France, conferred on her father, in recompense for his ideal Polish crown, those fertile provinces; the enjoyment and revenues of which were secured to him for his life. Such a substitution was in fact exchanging the armour of the Diomed, for that of Glaucus; a barren sceptre for one of gold.

Stanislaus, when this event took place in 1736, was already nearly sixty, and he remained during thirty years, Duke of Lorraine. His administration, mild, beneficent and liberal, rendered him beloved by his new subjects. He embellished Nancy, the capital; but he held his court and residence principally at Luneville, where he expired in consequence of a singular accident, having been burnt to death. Charles, King of Navarre, surnamed the Bad, perished nearly in the same manner, about four centuries earlier, at Pampeluna. The late Lady Mary Churchill, Sir Robert Walpole's daughter, who then resided with her husband at Luneville, has more than once recounted to me all the particu-

lars of Stanislaus's end. Mr. Churchill and Lady Mary, who lived in habits of intimacy with him, dined at his villa of Bon Secours, a short distance from Luneville, on the day preceding the catastrophe which terminated his life. She assured me, that though extremely bent with age and infirmities, being then near eighty-nine years old, he retained both his faculties and his good humour. Naturally gallant, he had a nominal mistress, the Marchioness de Boufflers, who occupied a part of the palace of Luneville, and to whom he was much attached; though he manifested neither jealousy nor dissatisfaction at her preference of a younger rival. His own chancellor had contrived to insinuate himself into Madame de Boufflers's favour; a fact of which the king was not ignorant. Taking leave of her one evening, when retiring to his apartment, after embracing her, "*Mon chancelier*," added he, "*vous dira le reste*;"—a jocose allusion to the words with which, as is well known, the French sovereigns, when holding a *bed of justice*, always finish their harangues. Stanislaus, during the last years of his life, withdrew to rest every night at nine o'clock, and his departure constituted the signal for commencing faro. All the persons of both sexes, composing his court and household, then sat down to that infatuating game, which was continued without intermission to a late hour. But a circumstance seemingly incredible is, that the rage for it became such, as to attract by degrees to the table all the domestics of the palace, down to the very turnspits or seullions; who, crowding around, staked their *ecus* on the cards over the heads of the company. Such a fact sufficiently proves the relaxation of manners which prevailed in the court of Lorraine under Stanislaus.

His death, as lady Mary Churchill related it to me, took place in February, 1766, in the following manner. The old king, who, like the Poles and Germans, was much addicted to smoking tobacco, usually finished several pipes every day. Being alone, in an undress, while endeavouring to knock out the ashes from his pipe, he set fire to his gown; and his *valet de chambre*, who alone exercised the privilege of entering his apartment, had unfortunately just

gone into the town of Luneville. His cries were not immediately heard; but when they reached the officer stationed on guard in the outward room, he flew to the king's assistance; and having contrived to throw him down on the floor, the flames were speedily extinguished. He might even have survived and recovered the accident, if it had not been accompanied with a singular circumstance. Stanislaus, who during the last years of his life,

— cum numina nobis
Mors instans majora facit, —

had become devout; as a penance for his transgressions, constantly wore under his shirt, next to his flesh, a "*reliquaire*," or girdle made of silver, having points on the inside, from space to space. These points becoming heated, and being pressed into his body, while in the act of extinguishing the fire, caused a number of wounds or sores; the discharge from which, at his advanced age, proved too severe for his enfeebled constitution. Conscious that his end approached, and only a short time before it took place, he expressed a warm desire to see Mr. Churchill and Lady Mary. They having immediately waited on him, the king received them with great complacency, and with perfect self-possession; took leave of them most cheerfully; remarked the singularity of his fortune throughout life; and added, alluding to the strange manner of his death, "*Il ne manquoit qu'une pareille mort, pour un aventurier comme moi*." He soon afterwards expired; retaining his senses and understanding almost to the last moments of his existence.

If Louis the Fifteenth, by the peace of 1736, acquired Lorraine for France, he covered himself and his country with military glory, during the war that commenced in 1741, on the death of the Emperor Charles the Sixth. Fleury was no more; he and Walpole having finished their political careers nearly about the same time. History can present, in no period of the world, an instance of a first minister commencing his administration, like Fleury, at seventy-three years of age, and retaining his power till he was ninety. Such a fact must, indeed, be considered as an excep-

tion to the general laws of nature, moral as well as physical. Cardinal Ximenes in Spain, who approached the nearest to him, died at eighty-one; and I believe, the Count de Maurepas, under Louis the Sixteenth, almost attained to a similar age. In 1744, the year after Fleury's decease, Louis was seized, at Metz, with a fever, which nearly proved fatal. If he had expired at that time, as was expected to happen every moment, during several successive days, his memory would have been embalmed in the hearts of his subjects and of mankind. Never were more ardent, or more universal vows offered up to heaven by the Roman people for the recovery of Germanicus, or for the preservation of Titus, than were made by the French nation for his restoration! They were unfortunately heard, and we are forced to exclaim with Juvenal,

*Provida Pompeio dederat campania febres
Optandas: sed multæ urbes, et publica vota
Vicerunt.* —

Though Louis, like Pompey, survived these testimonies of popular favour, yet, during the whole course of that war, down to its termination in 1748, he continued to deserve and to retain the affections of the nation. Four brilliant and triumphant campaigns, in one of which he was personally present, rendered him master of all the Austrian Netherlands. The military trophies of Marlborough, erected forty years earlier on the same plains, were lost at Fontenoy, at Raucoux, and at Lafeldt. Greater by his moderation than even by his conquests, Louis gave peace to Europe at Aix-la-Chapelle, when Holland lay open to his attack; and when Mr. Pelham, who was then at the head of the councils of England, possessed neither pecuniary nor military resources for maintaining the contest. Louis the Fourteenth may undoubtedly have inspired more terror at certain periods of his reign; but never excited more respect than did his successor at the conclusion of the great war, which took place on the accession of Maria Theresa.

It forms a curious subject of reflection, that the armies of France, during this splendid portion of Louis the Fifteenth's

reign, when he thus over-ran the Low Countries, were commanded by foreigners. To Condé, Turenne, and Luxembourg, had succeeded Catinat, Vendôme, Boufflers, and Villars: but these last generals left no successors. In 1734, Villars, at near four-score, remained the sole survivor of those illustrious commanders, who, from Rocroi down to Denain, from 1643 to 1712, had carried victory over so many countries of Europe. An Englishman, the Duke of Berwick, natural son of James the Second by Arabella Churchill, sister of the great Duke of Marlborough, was placed at the head of the French forces on the Rhine, in 1734: while a German and a Dane subjected Flanders to Louis the Fifteenth, between 1743 and 1748. Marshal Saxe, the former of these generals, attained a military reputation hardly exceeded by any individual in modern times. Lowendahl, the other, was immortalized by the capture of Bergen-op-Zoom, then regarded as the most impregnable fortress on the continent. Both survived the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle only a few years. I have been in the apartment of the palace of Chambord, near Blois, where Marshal Saxe expired in November, 1750; extenuated by pleasures which had enervated his Herculean frame, and produced his premature end at fifty-four years of age. The natural son of Augustus the Second, King of Poland, and Elector of Saxony, by the beautiful Countess of Königsmark, he inherited from his father an extraordinary degree of bodily strength; but, like Milo in antiquity,

*“Viribus ille
Confusus, perit, admirandisque lacertis.”*

At Chambord, where he maintained a magnificent establishment during the two last years of his life, he constantly entertained a company of comedians, as a sovereign prince. Mademoiselle Chantilly, an actress and a dancer in high reputation at Paris, having, from her personal beauty no less than from her theatrical merit, attracted the Marshal's attention; had, some years earlier, accompanied him on his campaigns in the Netherlands as his mistress. While he was engaged in the siege of Maestricht, Favart, a man who had found means to render himself master of her affections,

carried her off to Paris. After the termination of the war, Marshal Saxe caused proposals to be made her, for repairing to Chambord, to perform on his theatre. But she, who was married to Favart, knowing the marshal's designs, rejected all his offers. In this dilemma, determined again to gain possession of her, he applied to Monsieur de Berruyer, then *lieutenant de police*, requesting him to compel her to visit Chambord. Berruyer, desirous of obliging Marshal Saxe, made use of every argument, and enforced them by very ample pecuniary offers. Finding, however, all his exertions fruitless, he sent her a *lettre de cachet*, ordering her immediately to prison, or to Chambord. We must own that this atrocious abuse of power, which reminds us of Appius Claudius and Virginia, in the consular ages of Rome; excites indignation against a minister capable of thus prostituting his official functions, in order to gratify the depraved and licentious appetites of an exhausted voluptuary. Thus pressed between imprisonment and the sacrifice of her person, she preferred the latter expedient; as many other women might have done under her circumstances, without perhaps incurring either any deep degree of culpability, or exciting any strong emotions of moral reprobation. Pity, indeed, rather than condemnation, arises in the mind of every liberal man, on such a recital. It is difficult to relate the sequel of the story, without involuntarily wounding decorum: yet may the moral that it contains, almost apologise for such a deviation, or in some degree even demand it. Madame Favart having been reluctantly conducted to the marshal's bed, afterwards expressed herself with some contempt respecting him. Piqued at the insinuation, he had recourse to those expedients which *Pope*, one of the most correct of modern poets, who exclaims,

"Curst be the verse, how soft soe'er it flow,
That tends to make one honest man my foe;
Give virtue scandal, innocence a fear,
Or from the soft-eyed virgin steal a tear;"

yet has not hesitated to enumerate in his poem of "January and May." The auxiliary proved too powerful for the principal, and produced his death within

a short time. He expired nearly in the same manner as the regent Duke of Orleans had done, about twenty-five years earlier: a prince, to whom, both in his virtues, his endowments of mind, and his defects or vices, Marshal Saxe exhibited some analogy.

Louis the Fifteenth not only occupied the most distinguished place among the European sovereigns and powers, during the period of nearly eight years, which intervened between the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, and the commencement of the war of 1756; but, for a considerable time subsequent to that rupture, every success obtained was on the side of France. Beyond the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean, in Germany, as well as on the French coasts and shores, her arms maintained their ascendancy. Mezerai, or Voltaire, might have expatiated with exultation and pleasure on the events of Minorca, of Ticonderoga, of Braddock's defeat in Carolina, of Closter-seven, of St. Cas, and of Rochfort; as, on the other hand, assuredly neither Hume nor Smollet could have derived from the narration of those unfortunate or disgraceful transactions, any subject of triumph. That Louis, no less than his people, sunk under the energies of the first Mr. Pitt, between 1759 and 1762, must be admitted: but, all the achievements of that great minister, in both hemispheres, on the land and on the water, from the Philippines to Cuba, and from Cape Breton to Senegal, were sacrificed at the peace of Fontainebleau. We seemed to have humbled the two branches of the house of Bourbon, only to re-construct their fallen power: restoring all that we ought in wisdom to have retained: and retaining or acquiring all that in policy we should have surrendered to France and Spain. Witness Canada and Florida, which we preserved! Witness the Havanna, Martinique, Guadaloupe, and so many other islands or settlements which we ceded; not to include in the list, Manilla, a capture unknown to the British ministry who signed the treaty, and of which the ransom has never been paid, down to the present moment! Even the popularity of George the Third, sustained by the most irreproachable and exemplary display of private virtues, could not stand

the shock of such a peace; which covered him with nearly as much obloquy, as that of Utrecht had inflicted on Queen Anne.

France, from 1763 to 1770, repaired her losses; and while her councils were guided by the vigorous, as well as enterprising mind of Choiseul, Louis the Fifteenth, however vanquished he might have been in the preceding contest, reappeared with at least as much dignity on the theatre of Europe, as Louis the Fourteenth had done after the war of the succession. Choiseul, secure on the side of Flanders and of Germany, by the alliance subsisting with the house of Austria since 1756, extended succours to the Polish insurgents, against Catherine the Second; laid the foundations of the Swedish revolution, which was effected by Gustavus the Third in 1772; and reduced to the obedience of his master, the island of Corsica, nearly about the time when that country gave birth to a man, whose relentless and insatiable ambition or vengeance, have equally laid waste the territory of France and polluted by his crimes, or converted into a desert, the most flourishing kingdoms of the continent. The universal abhorrence excited by his atrocities, renders it unnecessary to name a monster, whose very existence, and still more, whose favoured place of retreat, an island situate on the delicious shore of Tuscany, midway between Leghorn and Toulon, surrounded by the splendour of a prince, seem to reproach the justice, no less than the policy, of the European powers.*

Louis the Fifteenth, like his predecessor, survived his only son; justifying the Roman poet's remark on the evils that accompany and characterize longevity, when he says,—

"Hæc pata Pœna diu viventibus, ut renovata
Semper clade Domus, multis in luctibus, inque
Perpetuo Mœrore, et nigra veste senescant."

The Dauphin Louis died at Fontainebleau, towards the end of 1765, at the age of about thirty-six. Whether we

consider his death abstractedly, with reference to his character and mental qualities; or whether we try it by the calamitous reign of his son, which may be said, without a metaphor, to have brought France to the block; we must be compelled to regard the dauphin's premature end, as one of the most unfortunate events which could have taken place for the French monarchy, and for the house of Bourbon. It was produced, as I have been assured by persons who had frequent access to him, and who enjoyed a distinguished place in his confidence, from the effect of medicines which he took, in order to repel or to disperse an eruption that appeared near his mouth. He was supposed to have caught the disorder from his wife the dauphiness, a princess of Saxony, daughter of Augustus the Third, King of Poland, who had a violent scorbutic humour in her blood. Malignity proceeded so far, as even to accuse the king his father of having caused the dauphin's death, by administering to him slow poison; a circumstance principally founded on the state of extenuation and languor to which he was reduced, during the long malady that brought him to the grave; but, for which atrocious imputation, not the slightest foundation existed in truth.

Louis the Fifteenth, though naturally indolent, as well as afterwards dissolute; and though he became, like Tiberius, profligate towards the close of his life; manifested no cruelty, nor systematic atrocity of character. He neither resembled Louis the Eleventh, nor Bonaparte. His son possessed firmness of mind, and a solid understanding, cultivated by polite letters. For the society of men distinguished by talents of any kind, the dauphin displayed as strong a partiality, as the king betrayed a disinclination, throughout his whole reign. Devout, and in some degree tinctured with bigotry, he nevertheless sought occasions of conversing with individuals, known to have embraced ideas adverse to the Catholic faith, as well as subversive of revealed religion. With *David Hume*, then secretary to the English embassy at Paris, and at the summit of his literary reputation; or as the "Heroic Epistle" says, "drunk with Gallic wine, and "Gallic praise;" the dauphin, not a

* The events which have taken place since the autumn of 1814, when these remarks were made on the selection of the Isle of Elba for Bonaparte's residence, have too well proved their solidity.

great while before his decease, held a long conversation, principally turning on points connected with philosophical disquisition. When *Hume* was presented to him, "I know," said he, "that you hold very free opinions on matters connected with revelation; but my principles are fixed, and therefore speak out to me; for otherwise I should only be conversing with a man in a mask. He was the third dauphin in hereditary descent, who had attained to manhood without ascending the French throne, within the short space of fifty-four years. His death was followed, at no long interval of time, by that of the dauphiness his widow, and the queen his mother; leaving Louis the Fifteenth at nearly sixty, surrounded by his daughters and his grandchildren.

Unquestionably, the four last years of his reign were passed in a manner worthy of Sardanapalus; oblivious of his public duties, insensible to national glory, and lost to every sentiment of private virtue, or even of decorum. From the instant that, dismissing Choiseul from his councils, and rejecting the favourable opportunity offered him by the dispute which arose between England and Spain, relative to the Falkland Islands, for recovering the honour, as well as the territories, lost by France during the preceding war; he abandoned himself to pleasures no longer suited to his age;—from that moment he became an object of contempt and opprobrium to his own subjects. Unfortunately for his fame, he has been principally tried and estimated by this inglorious portion of his life. Yet, even while the dukes of Aiguillon and of Richlieu directed public affairs, while the great seal of France was entrusted to Maupeou, while the finances were abandoned to the Abbé Terray, and while a woman of the most libertine description, Madame du Barry, presided over his looser hours; he at least exerted some proofs of vigour in his treatment of the parliaments of his kingdom, whom he controlled and banished: unlike his yielding successor, who suffered himself to be overwhelmed under the progressive effects of popular innovation.

When we compare the concluding years of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, from 1712 to 1715, with the termination

of his great grandson's life, from 1770 to 1774; we shall see that the court was alike, in both instances, completely under female control. It would indeed be as unjust to place Madame du Barry in competition with Madame de Maintenon; as to elevate Thais or Campaspé, to a level with Aspasia, or with Livia. Yet did the palace and court of the former prince, exhibit as degrading a scene of mingled hypocrisy, bigotry, and superstition, as Versailles displayed a spectacle of debauch and licentious pleasure, under the latter sovereign. If it were permitted to cite as authority for this assertion, the "*Pucelle*" of Voltaire; a poem no less captivating from its wit, than dangerous from its spirit and tendency: but, the historical portraits scattered throughout which production, are sketched with admirable ability by a master hand; we might there behold the ignominious figure which "the phoenix of the Bourbons" presented in the evening of his life, surrounded by devotees, priests, and monks,

"Hercule en Froc, et Priape en Soutane."

Louis the Fifteenth, during his last years, excites nevertheless more disgust than his predecessor, because it is unqualified by any sentiment of pity or of respect. His death, which took place under these circumstances, was hailed by the French as the era of their liberation from a yoke equally disgraceful and severe: while the new reign awakened in a nation characterized by its superficial or sanguine frame of mind, the most extravagant visions of future felicity. We may, however, safely assume that Louis the Fifteenth, who had refused to join Charles the Third of Spain in 1770, when every circumstance invited him to a rupture with England; and who was known to have taken an unalterable determination of terminating his life in peace;—we may be assured that such a prince, at sixty-eight or seventy, would not have sent La Fayette and Rochambeau across the Atlantic, there to imbibe the principles of rebellion and republicanism, with which they returned to inoculate France, and to subvert the throne. Louis the Sixteenth, only four after years his accession, in 1778, em-

braced, though against his own judgment, this pernicious and improvident measure, from which, in an eminent degree, flowed the destruction of his house. So true is it, that—

“Evertere domos totas, optantibus ipsis,
Di faciles.”

We cannot reflect without some surprise, that Louis the Fifteenth manifested more attention during his last illness, to the well-being and support of Madame du Barry, his mistress, after his decease; than his predecessor displayed for Madame de Maintenon, to whom he had been united near thirty years, by the legitimate ties of marriage. Scarron's widow possessed nothing as her own individual property, on the first of September, 1715, when Louis the Fourteenth breathed his last, except the estate of Maintenon, in the vicinity of Paris, which she had purchased; and a pension from the crown, of two thousand louis d'ors a year: while the former, besides the immense pecuniary gratifications which she had received from her royal lover during the period of her favour, was presented by him with the beautiful chateau and estate of Lusienne, situate near Marly. Yet Louis the Fourteenth, before he expired, contented himself with only recommending his future widow to the protection of the Duke of Orleans. His successor, on the contrary, at an early period of his disorder, after expressing the utmost anxiety respecting his mistress, delivered into the Duke d'Aiguillon's hands, confidentially for her use in the event of his own decease, a portfolio containing in notes, the sum of three millions of livres, or about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds sterling. The duke, with the true spirit of a courtier, carried this deposit to the new king.

At sixty-four, Louis the Fifteenth died of the small-pox, at Versailles; as his grand-father, the dauphin, only son of Louis the Fourteenth, was carried off at the Palace of Meudon, by the same malady, in 1711. While any reasonable expectations of his recovery were entertained, Madame du Barry continued her attendance about his person; every idea of the nature of his disease being studiously concealed from him: nor was he

permitted to regard himself in a looking-glass, lest he should discover the change effected in his countenance, by the pustules which covered his face. The Duke de Richlieu even kept guard at the door of his bed-chamber, to prevent the intrusion of any priest or ecclesiastic who might procure admission, and by warning him of his danger, awaken his apprehensions of eternity. But no sooner was his alarming situation understood, and the apparent improbability of his surviving the attack of so malignant a distemper became disseminated abroad; than Madame Louisa of France, the king's youngest daughter, who had taken the veil as a Carmelite nun, quitting the convent of which she was prioress at St. Denis, repaired to Versailles. With irresistible importunity she demanded admittance to her father, whom she admonished of his perilous state and impending dissolution: he was already sinking under the ravages of the disease, which left no hope of his surmounting its violence. Madame du Barry had been sent away some days before, to Lusienne. The king expired in a narrow white bed, placed between two windows of his apartment, which were constantly kept open on account of the heat of the weather, though the season of the year was by no means advanced, it being only the 10th day of May, 1774. These particulars have all been related to me not long after they took place, by a gentleman, one of his pages, who attended him throughout the whole course of his disorder.

It is obvious, after a consideration of these facts, that the successor of Louis the Fifteenth must have ascended the throne under the most favourable auspices. To the majesty of the first European crown, he added the brilliancy of opening life, not having yet completed his twentieth year. But though young Louis possessed neither the graces, the activity, nor the elasticity of mind usually characteristic of youth. Heavy, inert, inclined to corpulency, and destitute of all aptitude for any exercises of the body, except hunting; he seemed like James the First of England unfit for appearing in the field. His manners were shy, a natural result of his neglected education; which made Madame du Barry commonly call him, during his

grandfather's life, "*Le gros garçon, mal élevé.*" Yet never did any prince manifest more rectitude of intention, greater probity, or a warmer desire to advance the felicity of his people. Nor was his understanding by any means inadequate to fulfilling those beneficent designs. He even endeavoured, at an early period of his reign, to repair the want of preceding instruction, by intense private application. For geography he displayed an uncommon passion; and it is well known that none of his ministers equalled him in that branch of knowledge. Before 1778, when the French cabinet embraced the injudicious determination of aiding the Americans, by sending out D'Estaing with a fleet to their support; the king had rendered himself so perfect a master of the topography of the transatlantic continent, that from the river St. Lawrence, to the southern extremity of Florida, not a head-land, a bay, a river, or almost an inlet, were unknown to him. Warmly attached to the queen his wife, and indisposed to connections of gallantry, his nuptial fidelity could admit of no dispute; and in all the relations of domestic life, he might be esteemed not only blameless, but meritorious. George the Third could hardly lay claim to higher moral esteem and approbation, in his private character.

Impressed with deep sentiments of filial piety, and of respect for the memory, as well as for the precepts or advice, of his father the dauphin, he selected his ministers in compliance with that prince's written instructions, which he had carefully preserved, and religiously obeyed. Those instructions impelled him to place the Count de Maurepas at the head of the new administration, though that nobleman had then attained a very advanced period of life. He was indeed as old as the Cardinal de Fleury, when he assumed the management of affairs, having attained his seventy-third year, in 1774; and having passed the preceding twenty-five years in exile, at Bourges, the obscure capital of the central and secluded province of Berri. It may, however, be justly questioned, whether in this choice, Louis the Sixteenth was fortunate. Maurepas, though a man of superior talents, who preserved in age all the freshness of his

intellect; yet plunged his country into the alliance with America, which proved eventually, at no great distance of time, the leading source of all the revolutionary calamities that have desolated France. In his selection of Vergennes for the foreign department, the king apparently manifested more discernment. I was at Stockholm, in June, 1774, when the courier, who brought the intelligence of Louis the Fifteenth's death, delivered to Monsieur de Vergennes, then the French ambassador at the court of Sweden, letters recalling him to Paris, in order to form a member of the cabinet. Happily for themselves, neither Maurepas nor Vergennes survived to witness the commencement of the revolution.

If a combination of almost all those qualities or endowments, which, in a private station, conciliate esteem and excite respect, could have secured to Louis the sixteenth a tranquil reign, he might justly have pretended to that felicity. But, unfortunately, he wanted the bolder and more affirmative features of the mind, which confirm dominion, repress or extinguish innovation, retain the various classes of subjects in their respective orbits, inspire becoming apprehension, and preserve the throne from insult or attack. These defects had not indeed become apparent to the nation at large, as early as 1776; but they were not the less obvious to such individuals as had access to his person and court. Perhaps, had he succeeded in more tranquil times, or if he had been the immediate successor of Louis the Fourteenth; under whom, although the monarchy was convulsed, and had been almost overturned by foreign enemies towards the conclusion of that reign, yet the monarchical principle and power remained firmly rooted in public opinion; he might have maintained himself in his elevation. But even before the commencement of the American war, Voltaire, Rousseau, and their disciples, had undermined both the foundations of the throne and of the altar, by inculcating philosophical principles; which, however fascinating in appearance, were calculated in their results, to propel the inferior ranks upon the upper orders of society. A spirit of disquisition, of discontent, of complaint, and of reform, which pervaded not only the mass of

the French population, but, which had infected even the army, the navy, and however strange it may seem, the church itself; menaced the most alarming consequences. Henry the Fourth and Sully would have anticipated and suppressed it in the birth. Louis the Thirteenth and Richlieu would have combated and vanquished it in the field. Louis the Fourteenth and Louvois would have either dispersed, or have overawed and intimidated it, by measures of vigour. Even the regent duke, Fleury, or Choiseul, would not have supinely allowed it to mature its destructive powers, till it burst into a conflagration.

If ever France stood in need of a strong, and even a severe ruler, it was at the death of Louis the Fifteenth; when the person of the prince, and the throne itself, were alike, although from different causes, fallen into universal contempt. A sovereign of energy, who had possessed military talents, and who, instead of breaking the household troops, disarming the royal authority, and then imprudently convoking the States General; would have mounted on horseback, placed a strong garrison in the bastille, arrested the first instigators to sedition, sent the Duke of Orleans to the castle of Vincennes, and put himself at the head of his army in the last resort, against his rebellious subjects;—such a king might have defied the revolution. But, Louis the Sixteenth laboured under a double inaptitude, moral and physical. He was the only monarch since Philip of Valois, if not the single instance that occurs since Hugh Capet, the founder of the third dynasty, who never had, on any occasion, appeared in person among his soldiers. Louis the Fifteenth, and his son the dauphin, though neither of them were distinguished by martial ardour, yet assisted in the field, made a nominal campaign in the Netherlands; and were stationed by Marshal Saxe in such a manner, at the battle of Fontenoy, as at least to be spectators of, if not participators in, the victory gained on that memorable day. Their ill-fated descendant could never be propelled into such exertions, and he even betrayed a dislike towards showing himself at the peaceful ceremony of a review.

His personal courage itself, whatever

flattery may assert, or candour may suggest, was problematical. That he displayed presence of mind, calmness, and contempt of death, when surrounded by a furious populace, in October, 1789, at Versailles, and in June, 1792, at the Tuilleries, cannot be disputed. But, on the scaffold, in January, 1793, for the performance of which last act he must, nevertheless, have been prepared, by all the aids of reflection, and all the supports of religion; he did not comport himself with the serenity and self-possession that characterized Charles the First, and Mary, Queen of Scots, when laying down their heads on the block. It must, however, be admitted on the other hand, that the guillotine, which was only an atrocious revolutionary engine, invented, not so much to abbreviate the sufferings of the condemned individual, as to facilitate the despatch of a number of victims with certainty, in a shorter space of time, bereaved death of all its grace and dignity. I have likewise seen and read very strong attestations to the firmness, displayed by the King of France in his last moments. On the 26th of January, 1793, the day on which the official account of his execution arrived in London; being alone with the Duke of Dorset, who was then lord steward, at St. James's palace, he received a note, which he immediately showed me, and which I copied on the spot. It contained these words:—

“Paris, 21st January, 12 o'clock.

“The unfortunate Louis is no more. He suffered death this morning, at ten o'clock, with the most heroic courage.”

“To the Duke of Dorset.”

The note had no signature, but the duke told me, that he knew both the hand-writing and the writer. Yet I have been assured that Louis attempted to resist or impede the executioners; who, impatient for obvious reasons, to finish the performance, used a degree of violence, threw him down forcibly on the plank, in which act his face was torn, and finally thrust him under the guillotine. The hope and expectation of a rescue, which he unquestionably nourished down to the last moment, might, I am well aware, explain the king's motive

for protracting the time, without impeaching his courage; and might throw an air of irresolution over his deportment. But his Queen and his sister displayed more decision. Marie Antoinette, and Madame Elizabeth, each, exhibited in turn, one, the heroism of an elevated mind, superior to death; the other, the calm resignation of a saint and a martyr, under the same circumstances. Even the Duke of Orleans himself, covered as he was with crimes and turpitudes, yet derived from despair a species of affirmative courage, hurried to the place of execution, ascended the scaffold with rapidity, and rushed upon his fate.

In the summer of 1776, when I quitted France, Marie Antoinette may be said to have reached the summit of her beauty, and of her popularity. Her favour with the nation at large declined from the period of her brother the Emperor Joseph the Second's visit to Paris, in 1777; after which interview between them, her enemies, with equal falsity and malignity, accused her of sacrificing both the treasures and the interests of the French monarchy to her Austrian connections. Her personal charms, which Burke has over rated, consisted more in her elevated manner, lofty demeanour, and graces of deportment, all which announced a queen, than in her features or countenance, which wanted softness and regularity. She had besides weak, or rather inflamed eyes; but her complexion, which was dazzling, aided by youth, and all the decorations of dress, in which ornaments she displayed great taste, imposed on the beholder. In the national estimation, her greatest defect at this period of life consisted in her sterility; she having been married full six years, without giving any apparent prospect of issue. But Anne of Austria had remained nearly two and twenty years under the same reproach, before she brought into the world Louis the Fourteenth. The Count de Provence was likewise destitute of any children, though as early as 1771 he had espoused a daughter of the King of Sardinia; while the Count d'Artois, youngest of the three brothers, married to another princess of Savoy, was already become a father. His son, born in 1775, had been created Duke d'Angouleme. Both the king and the

Count de Provence were then generally regarded, in different ways, as equally inapt for the purposes of marriage. It had nevertheless been ascertained, that Louis the Sixteenth laboured under no impediment for perpetuating his race, except a slight defect in his physical organization, easily susceptible of relief by a surgical operation; but, to undergo which, he for a long time manifested great repugnance. The importance of the case, and the pressing instances which were made to him, having at length, however, surmounted his scruples, he submitted to it; and the queen lay in of a daughter in December, 1778, whose unmerited sufferings, filial, and heroic virtues, have justly endeared her to all Europe. But Marie Antoinette did not, till several years later, produce a Dauphin.

Of the three royal brothers, the Count d'Artois had been cast by nature in the most graceful mould. All the dignity of Louis the Fourteenth had exclusively descended to him. His elder brother, the Count de Provence, who resembled the king in his person, was less known to the nation, in 1776, than either of the others. Moderate in his character, and of retired habits; possessing a strong mind, and a highly cultivated understanding, but destitute of brilliant or of dangerous talents, he approved himself, on all occasions, the most submissive of subjects. Both the younger princes resided constantly at Versailles, in a part of the royal palace; accompanied the king, whenever he repaired to Compiègne or to Fontainebleau; commonly attended him at mass, as well as to the chace; and never absented themselves, even on an excursion to Paris, without his permission. Philip, Duke de Chartres, too well known to us by his vindictive and criminal political intrigues, which at a more recent period have conducted, in so great a degree, to the subversion of the house of Bourbon; was already fallen, at the time of which I speak, under the public condemnation or contempt. He had then been married several years, to the sole daughter and heiress of the Duke de Penthièvre, last male of the illegitimate descendants of Louis the Fourteenth; and the popular voice accused him of having plunged the

Prince de Lamballe, his brother-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre's only son, into the debaucheries which terminated his life in the flower of his age. That young prince espoused, at a very early period, one of the Princesses of Carignan, collaterally descended from the house of Savoy : whose tragical end in 1792, when she was massacred at the prison of *La Force* in Paris, forms a revolting feature of the great act of blood, denominated "the French revolution."

As the Prince de Lamballe left no issue, the Duke de Chartres was asserted to have accelerated, or rather to have produced his death, from the sordid, as well as detestable motive, of inheriting, in right of his consort, the vast estates of Penthièvre. However destitute of proof, and perhaps even of just foundation, may have been this imputation ; yet the character and notorious profligacy of the duke obtained for it universal belief. Affecting to emulate the Regent Duke of Orleans, his great grandfather's example, whose portrait was always suspended close to his bed ; he only imitated that prince in the licentious depravity of his manners, and the abandoned nature of his amours. The regent, whether in Italy, where he was wounded in 1706, fighting desperately in the trenches before Turin ; in Spain, where he commanded the French armies with distinguished lustre ; or at home, while conducting the helm of affairs, during the minority of Louis the Fifteenth ; whatever vices he displayed, redeemed them in some measure by his valour, loyalty, and capacity. His degenerate descendant incurred the abhorrence of all Europe, overturned the throne of France, perished by the guillotine, and may be esteemed the most atrocious, as well as flagitious individual who has arisen in modern ages, for the calamity of mankind, with the single exception of Bonaparte.

Returning to England in the summer of 1776, I went down soon afterwards, on a visit to Lord Nugent, at Gosfield in Essex ; a seat which has since, in the revolutionary events of the present times, afforded a temporary asylum to the august representative of the Capetian line, when expelled from a country over which his ancestors had reigned, in un-

interrupted male succession, for above eight hundred years ! When I visited Gosfield, among the guests who attracted most attention, might justly be reckoned the late Lord Temple, then far advanced in life, and very infirm. In his person he was tall and large, though not inclined to corpulency. A disorder, the seat of which lay in his ribs, bending him almost double, compelled him, in walking, to make use of a sort of crutch : but his mind seemed exempt from any decay. His conversation was animated, brilliant, and full of entertainment. Notwithstanding the nick name of "Squire Gawkey," which he had obtained in the satirical, or party productions of those times, and which, we may presume, was not given him with good reason ; he had nevertheless the air and appearance of a man of high condition, when he appeared with the insignia and decorations of the *garter*, seated at table. It is well known that George the Second, who, though he generally yielded to ministerial violence or importunity, yet manifested often great reluctance and even ill humour, in his manner of compliance on these occasions, strongly disliked Lord Temple. Being, however, compelled, in consequence of political arrangements very repugnant to his feelings, to invest that nobleman with the order of the *garter*, the king took so little pains to conceal his aversion, both to the individual, and to the act ; that instead of placing the ribband decorously over the shoulder of the new knight, his majesty, averting his head, and muttering indistinctly some expressions of dissatisfaction threw it across him, and turned his back at the same instant, in the rudest manner.

George the Third, on such occasions, possessed or exerted more restraint over his passions, than did his grandfather. Yet even he did not always execute the commands of his minister, where they were disagreeable or revolting to him, without displaying some reluctance. I have been assured from high contemporary authority, that at the ceremony of investing the present Marquis Camden with the order of the *garter*, after his return from Ireland, where he had been lord lieutenant ; his majesty, who felt not a little unwilling to confer it on him,

betrayed a considerable degree of ill humour in his countenance and manner. However, as he knew that it must be performed, Mr. Pitt having pertinaciously insisted on it; the king took the ribband in his hand, and turning to an individual present, before the new knight approached, asked of him, if he knew Lord Camden's christian name. The person thus addressed, after inquiring, informed him that it was John Jeffreys. "What! what!" replied the king; John Jeffreys! the first "knight of the *garter*, I believe, that ever was called John Jeffreys." The aversion of George the Second towards Lord Temple, originated partly in personal, but more from political motives or feelings. His present majesty's disinclination to confer the *garter* on Lord Camden, probably arose merely from considering his descent, though most honourable and respectable, as not sufficiently illustrious. But the great talents and qualities of the first earl, had diffused a lustre over the name of *Pratt*. In the eye of reason and of true philosophy, such a father conferred more dignity on his issue, than if they had derived their origin from Nell Gwynn, or from Mademoiselle de la Querouaille, or from Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, by a prince like Charles the Second. We may exclaim with *Pope* on the occasion,

"What, tho' thy ancient, but ignoble blood,
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever, since the flood!"

Yet might the sovereign, when conferring the *garter*, justly consider the pretensions of a Duke of St. Albans, as higher than those of Earl Camden; although the latter was the heir and representative of a man, who united in his legal and public character some of the most shining qualities that can elevate or adorn human nature. To these endowments of the father, the son originally owed the dignity of the peerage, which devolved on him. To Mr. Pitt's friendship he was subsequently indebted for the distinction of the *garter*.

Lord Nugent was created an Irish earl during the time that I was at Gosfield, having antecedently been raised to the title of *Viscount Clare*. He formed a striking contrast to Lord Temple, in

his manners and address. Of an athletic frame, and a vigorous constitution, though very far advanced in years, he was exempt from infirmity; possessing a stentorian voice, with great animal spirits, and vast powers of conversation. He was indeed a man of very considerable natural abilities, though not of a very cultivated mind. His talents seemed more adapted to active, than to speculative life; to the drawing room, or the house of commons, than to the closet. Having sat in many parliaments, he spoke fluently, as well as with energy and force; was accounted a good debater, and possessed a species of eloquence, altogether unembarrassed by any false modesty or timidity. In the progress of a long life, he had raised himself from a private gentleman, of an ancient family in Ireland, and a considerable patrimonial fortune, to an Irish earldom; which dignity, together with his name, he procured to devolve on the late Marquis of Buckingham, then Mr. Grenville, who had married his only daughter. They were both likewise at Gosfield, during the time of which I speak; and Lord Nugent having gone up to town, for the purpose of kissing the king's hand, upon his new creation, returned from thence on the following day, as we were seated at table, after dinner. The object of his visit to St. James's was well known by every one present; but he immediately announced it, as soon as he had taken his place, by filling out a glass of wine, and toasting his daughter's health, as *Lady Mary Grenville*.

Lord Nugent, when young, had occupied a distinguished place in the favour of Frederic, Prince of Wales; and was more than once destined to have filled an office in some of those imaginary administrations, commemorated by Dodington, which were perpetually fabricated at Leicester house, during the long interval of near fourteen years that elapsed between the accession of George the Second, and his royal highness's decease in 1751. The prince died considerably in his debt; nor was the sum so due ever liquidated, unless we consider the offices and dignities conferred on Lord Nugent by George the Third, at different periods of his reign, as having been in

the nature of a retribution for loans made to his father. In return for these marks of royal favour, he presented verses to the queen, accompanying a piece of Irish stuff, which her majesty graciously accepted. Both the poetry and the manufacture were satirically said to be *Irish stuff*. They began, if I recollect right,

“ Could poor Ierné gifts afford,
Worthy the mistress of her lord,
Of sculptur'd gold, a costly frame,
Just emblem of her worth should flame.”

But, Lord Nugent's muse will never rank him with *Prior*, nor even with *Lytelton* and *Chesterfield*. He was a better courtier than a poet; and he had always been distinguished by the other sex. *Glover*, when speaking of him, says, “Nugent, a jovial and voluptuous Irishman, who had left Popery, for the protestant religion, money, and widows.” His first wife, lady Amelia Plunket, daughter of the Earl of Fingal, brought him only one son, Colonel Nugent, who died many years before his father. Mrs. Knight, sister and heiress of the celebrated Craggs, secretary of state under George the First, buried in Westminster Abbey (and who is immortalized by Pope's epitaph on him, more perhaps than by his talents or his actions); was Lord Nugent's second wife. She brought him neither felicity nor issue; but she brought him the house and estate at Gosfield, one of the finest domains in Essex. To the Countess Dowager of Berkeley, he gave his hand a third time; though not under fortunate auspices, nor in a happy hour. The late Marchioness of Buckingham was the only issue of this match, recognized by Lord Nugent. But, his devotion to the sex, which remained proof to all trials, animated him even to the close of life. Lord Temple and he, both, composed verses, after this time, addressed to the same object. I believe it was in the month of August, 1776, that these aged peers presented some couplets of their respective compositions, to the late Duchess of Gordon, then in the meridian of her charms; when Lord Temple having entertained her and the duke at Stow, lighted up the Grotto for her reception. Lord Nugent, to a perfect knowledge of the world,

joined a coarse and often licentious, but natural, strong, and ready wit, which no place, nor company, prevented him from indulging; and the effect of which was augmented by an Irish accent that never forsook him. It is well known, that when a *bill* was introduced into the House of Commons, for better watching the metropolis; in order to contribute towards effecting which object, one of the clauses went to propose, that watchmen should be *compelled* to sleep during the day-time; Lord Nugent, with admirable humour, got up, and desired that “he might be personally included in the provisions of the *bill*, being frequently so tormented with the gout, as to be *unable* to sleep either by day, or by night.”

While I am on this subject, I cannot resist relating a frolic, which rendered Lord Nugent, or rather Mr. Nugent, he being then a commoner, not a little distinguished, towards the end of George the Second's reign. George, Earl of Bristol, eldest of the three sons of the famous Lord Hervey, whom Pope has, very unjustly, transmitted to posterity, as “Lord Fanny,” and as “Sporus;” like his father, inclined to a degree of effeminacy in his person, manners, and dress. Probably, these characteristics of deportment, while they exposed him to some animadversion or ridicule, led to a supposition that they were connected with want of spirit; and that he would not promptly resent insult. Certain it is that Mr. Nugent, then a man of consideration, fortune, and fashion, living in the highest company of the metropolis; being one evening at Lord Temple's house in Pall-Mall, where a splendid assembly of both sexes was collected; laid a singular bet with Lord Temple, that he would spit in the Earl of Bristol's hat. The wager was accepted, and Mr. Nugent instantly set about its accomplishment. For this purpose, as he passed Lord Bristol, who stood in the door-way of one of the apartments, very richly dressed, holding his hat under his arm, with the inside uppermost; Mr. Nugent, turning round as if to spit, and affecting not to perceive Lord Bristol, performed that act in his hat.

Pretending the utmost concern and distress at the unintentional rudeness

that he had committed, Mr. Nugent made a thousand apologies to the earl for his indecorum, and entreated to be allowed to wipe off the affront with his pocket handkerchief: but, Lord Bristol calmly taking out his own, used it for that purpose; besought Mr. Nugent not to be discomposed; assured him that he was not discomposed himself; wiped the inside of his hat; and then replacing it as before, under his arm, asked Mr. Nugent whether he had any farther occasion for it in the same way? Having so done, the earl, without changing a muscle of his countenance, or manifesting any irritation, quitted the place where he stood; sat down to play with the party he usually made at cards, finished his two or three rubbers, and returned home. Mr. Nugent, after triumphantly winning his bet, considered the matter as terminated; but in this supposition he counted without his host. Early on the following morning, before he was risen, he received a note, similar in its nature and contents to that which Gil Blas tells us he delivered to his master, Don Mathias de Sylva; but, with the summons contained in which, Mr. Nugent did not manifest the same careless promptitude to comply, as the Spanish grandee exhibited in the novel of *Le Sage*. The note acquainted him, that Lord Bristol expected and demanded satisfaction for the insult of the preceding night, without delay; naming time, as well as place. An instant answer was required.

Mr. Nugent now perceived that he had involved himself in a very serious affair of honour, where he had only meant to gratify a wanton moment of frolic. However personally brave, he felt that the exertion of his courage, in order to cover or justify a premeditated insult, which no sophistry could warrant or excuse, would only aggravate his offence. Under this impression, having determined therefore to make reparation, he wrote to Lord Bristol, offering every possible apology for the act committed; which, he admitted, would be inexcusable, if it had been meant as an affront. But, as the best extenuation of so gross a seeming violation of all decorum, he added, that it did not arise from the most remote intention of insulting the earl, the

whole matter having originated in a bet. He concluded by professing his readiness to ask pardon in the most ample manner; requesting that the business might not produce any further consequences. To this application Lord Bristol replied, that though he was disposed readily to admit, and to accept, the proffered reparation; yet, as the affront had been committed in public company, so must the exacted apology be made; and he named the club-room at White's, as the place where he would receive it from Mr. Nugent. Not, however, by any means, Lord Bristol added, from him only; for, as he now understood that the act itself owed its rise to a wager, it became clear that there must be another person implicated in the transaction. He insisted therefore on knowing the name of that individual, from whom, as a participator in the frolic, he should equally exact an apology; and declaring that on no other conditions would he relinquish his right to demand personal satisfaction. In consequence of so peremptory a requisition, Mr. Nugent owned that Lord Temple was the person to whom he had alluded; and both the gentlemen were finally reduced to comply with the terms, by asking pardon in the club-room at White's. Lord Bristol then declared himself satisfied, and the affair at an end.

The late Lord Sackville told me that when young, he was well acquainted with Lord Mark Kerr; a nobleman whose person being, like Lord Bristol's, cast by nature in a very delicate mould, sometimes subjected him among strangers to insults, from a supposition that a man of so feminine a figure would not be prone to resent an affront. In this calculation they were, however, egregiously deceived, he being a person of decided courage. Shortly after the battle of Dettingen, during the summer of the year 1743, the Earl of Stair, then commanding the British forces in Germany, under George the Second, entertained at his table several French officers, who had been taken prisoners in that engagement. A numerous company sat down to dinner, in the tent of the commander-in-chief, among whom was Lord Mark; who being son to the Marquis of Lothian, and nearly related to Lord Stair, acted as one of his aids-de-camp. Lord Sackville was pre-

sent on the occasion. A difference of opinion having arisen during the repast, on some point which was maintained by one of the French officers with great pertinacity; Lord Mark Kerr, in a very gentle tone of voice, ventured to set him right on the matter of fact. But the Frenchman, unconscious of his quality, and perhaps thinking that a frame so delicate, did not enclose a high spirit, contradicted him in the most gross terms, such as are neither used nor submitted to among gentlemen. The circumstance took place so near to Lord Stair, as unavoidably to attract his attention. No notice whatever was taken of it at the time, and after dinner the company adjourned to another tent, where coffee was served. Lord Mark coming in about a quarter of an hour later than the others, Lord Stair no sooner observed him than calling him aside, "Nephew," said he, "I think it is impossible for you to pass by the affront that you received from the French officer at my table. You must demand satisfaction, however much I regret the necessity for it." "Oh, my Lord," answered Lord Mark, with his characteristic gentleness of manner, "you need not be under any uneasiness on that subject. We have already fought. I ran him through the body. He died on the spot, and they are at this moment about to bury him. I knew too well what I owed to myself, and I was too well convinced of your lordship's way of thinking, to lose a moment in calling the officer to account."

I passed the ensuing winter, of 1776-7 in London; a period which is now so distant, and the manners, as well as the inhabitants of the metropolis, have undergone since that time so total a change, that they no longer preserve almost any similarity. The sinister events of the American war had already begun to shed a degree of political gloom over the capital and the kingdom: but this cloud, dark as it was, bore no comparison with the terror and alarm which pervaded the firmest minds in 1792 and 1793, after the first explosion of the French revolution, the deposition of Louis the Sixteenth, and the commencement of the continental war in Flanders. In 1777, we in fact only contended for empire and dominion. No fears of subversion, extinction, and subjugation to foreign violence, or to re-

volutionary arts, interrupted the general tranquillity of society. It was subjected indeed, to other fetters, from which we have since emancipated ourselves; those of dress, etiquette, and form. The lapse of two centuries could scarcely have produced a greater alteration in these particulars than have been made by about forty years. That costume, which is now confined to the levee, or the drawing-room, was then worn by persons of condition, with few exceptions, every where, and every day. Mr. Fox and his friends, who might be said to dictate to the town, affecting a style of neglect about their persons, and manifesting a contempt of all the usages hitherto established, first threw a sort of discredit on dress. From the House of Commons, and the clubs in St. James's street, the contagion spread through the private assemblies of London. But though gradually undermined, and insensibly perishing of an atrophy, dress never totally fell, till the era of jacobinism and of equality, in 1793, and 1794. It was then that pantaloons, cropped hair, and shoe-strings, as well as the total abolition of buckles and ruffles, together with the disuse of hair-powder, characterized the men: while ladies having cut off their tresses, which had done so much execution; and one *lock* of which purloined, gave rise to the finest model of mock heroic poetry, which our own or any other language can boast; exhibited heads rounded "*à la victime*, *et à la guillotine*," as if ready for the stroke of the axe. A drapery, more suited to the climate of Greece or of Italy, than to the temperature of an island situate in the fifty-first degree of latitude; classic, elegant, luxurious, and picturesque, but ill calculated to protect against damp, cold and fogs; superseded the ancient female attire of Great Britain; finally levelling or obliterating almost all external distinction between the highest and the lowest of the sex, in this country. Perhaps, with all its incumbrances, penalties, and inconveniences, it will be found necessary, at some not very distant period, to revive, in a certain degree, the empire of dress.

At the time of which I speak, the "*gens de lettres*," or "blue stockings," as they were commonly denominated, formed a

very numerous, powerful, compact phalanx, in the midst of London. Into this society, the two publications which I had recently given to the world; one on the Northern Kingdoms of Europe; the other on the History of France under the race of Valois; however destitute of merit they might be, yet facilitated and procured my admission. Mrs. Montague was then the *Madame du Deffand* of the English capital; and her house constituted the central point of union, for all the persons who already were known, or who emulated to become known, by their talents and productions. Her supremacy, unlike that of *Madame du Deffand*, was indeed established on more solid foundations than those of intellect; and rested on more tangible materials than any with which Shakspeare himself could furnish her. Though she had not yet begun to construct the splendid mansion in which she afterwards resided, near Portman Square, she lived in a very elegant house in Hill street. Impressed probably from the suggestions of her own knowledge of the world, with a deep conviction of the great truth laid down by Moliere, which no man of letters ever disputed; that "*Le vrai amphytrion est celui chez qui l'on dine*;" Mrs. Montague was accustomed to open her house to a large company of both sexes, whom she frequently entertained at dinner. A service of plate, and a table plentifully covered, disposed her guests to admire the splendour of her fortune, not less than the lustre of her talents. She had found the same results flowing from the same causes during the visits that she made to Paris, after the peace of 1763; where she displayed to the astonished *litterati* of that metropolis, the extent of her pecuniary, as well as of her mental resources. As this topic formed one of the subjects most gratifying to her, she was easily induced to launch out on it, with much apparent complacency. The eulogiums lavished on her repasts, and the astonishment expressed at the magnitude of her income, which appeared prodigiously augmented by being transformed from pounds sterling into French livres; seemed to have afforded her as much gratification, as the panegyries bestowed upon the "*Essays on the Genius and Writings of Shakspeare*."

Mrs. Montague, in 1776, verged towards her sixtieth year; but her person, which was thin, spare, and in good preservation, gave her an appearance of less antiquity. From the infirmities often attendant on advanced life, she seemed to be almost wholly exempt. All the lines of her countenance bespoke intelligence, and her eyes were accommodated to her cast of features, which had in them something satirical and severe, rather than amiable or inviting. She possessed great natural cheerfulness, and a flow of animal spirits; loved to talk, and talked well on almost every subject; led the conversation, and was qualified to preside in her circle, whatever subject of discourse was started: but her manner was more dictatorial and sententious, than conciliating or diffident. There was nothing feminine about her; and though her opinions were usually just, as well as delivered in language suited to give them force, yet the organ which conveyed them was not soft or harmonious. Destitute of taste in disposing the ornaments of her dress, she nevertheless studied or affected those aids, more than would seem to have become a woman professing a philosophic mind, intent on higher pursuits than the toilet. Even when approaching to fourscore, this female weakness still accompanied her; nor could she relinquish her diamond necklace and bows, which like Sir William Draper's "blushing ribband," commemorated by "Junius," formed, of evenings, the perpetual ornament of her emaciated person. I used to think that these glittering appendages of opulence, sometimes helped to dazzle the disputants, whom her arguments might not always convince, or her literary reputation intimidate. That reputation had not as yet received the rude attack made on it by Dr Johnson at a subsequent period, when he appears to have treated with much irreverence, her "*Essay on Shakspeare*," if we may believe his biographer Boswell. Notwithstanding the defects and weaknesses that I have enumerated, she possessed a masculine understanding, enlightened, cultivated and expanded by the acquaintance of men, as well as of books. Many of the most illustrious persons in rank, no less than in ability, under the reigns of George the Second

and Third, had been her correspondents, friends, companions, and admirers. — Pultney, Earl of Bath, whose portrait hung over the chimney piece in her drawing room; and George, the first Lord Lyttleton, so eminent for his genius, were among the number. She was constantly surrounded by all that was distinguished for attainments or talents, male or female, English or foreign; and it would be almost ungrateful in me not to acknowledge the gratification derived from the conversation and intercourse of such a society.

Though Mrs. Montague occupied the first place among the "*beaux esprits*" at this period, she was not without female competitors for so eminent a distinction. Mrs. Vesey might indeed be said to hold the second rank: but unlike Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse at Paris, who under the auspices of d'Alembert, raised a separate literary standard from Madame du Deffand; Mrs. Vesey only aspiring to follow at a humble distance the brilliant track of Mrs. Montague. The former rather seemed desirous to assemble persons of celebrity and talents under her roof, or at her table, than assumed or pretended to form one of the number herself. Though not lodged with the same magnificence as Mrs. Montague, yet she entertained with less form, as well as less ostentation. Mrs. Vesey's repasts were at once more select, and more delicate. Farther advanced in life than Mrs. Montague, she possessed no personal advantages of manner, and studied no ornaments of dress. Simplicity, accompanied by a sort of oblivious inattention to things passing under her very sight, characterized her. In absence of mind, indeed, she might almost be said to equal the Duke de Brancas, chamberlain to Anne of Austria, relative to whose continual violation of common rules, Madame de Sevigné has consigned to us so many amusing anecdotes. With Mrs. Vesey this forgetfulness extended to such a point, that she sometimes hardly remembered her own name. It will scarcely be credited, that she could declaim against second marriages, to a lady of quality who had been twice married, and though Mr. Vesey was her own second husband. When at last reminded of the circumstance, she only exclaimed, "Bless me,

my dear, I had quite forgotten it!" There was, indeed, some decay of mind in such want of recollection. Her sister-in-law, who lived in the same house with her, and who formed, physically as well as morally, a perfect contrast to Mrs. Vesey, superintended all domestic arrangements. From their opposite figures, qualities and endowments, the one was called "body," the other "mind."

In these two houses might then be seen many or most of the persons of both sexes, eminent for literary attainments, or celebrity of any kind. Mrs. Thrale, still better known by the name of Mrs. Piozzi, was to be met with frequently in this society, followed or attended by Mr. Thrale, and by Dr. Johnson. Of the former it is unnecessary to say any thing; and relative to the last, after the laboured, minute portraits which have been drawn of him under every attitude, what is it possible to say new? — I will freely confess that his rugged exterior and garb, his uncouth gestures, his convolutions and distortions, when added to the rude or dogmatical manner in which he delivered his opinions and decisions on every point; — rendered him so disagreeable in company, and so oppressive in conversation, that all the superiority of his talents could not make full amends, in my estimation, for these defects. In his anger, or even in the warmth of argument, where he met with opposition, he often respected neither age, rank, nor sex; and the usages of polished life imposed a very inadequate restraint on his expressions, or his feelings. What are we to think of a man, who, by the testimony of his own biographer, denominated Lord Russel and Algernon Sidney "rascals;" qualified Pennant by the epithet of "a dog," because in his political opinions he was a *whig*; gave to Fielding the appellations of "a blockhead, and a barren rascal;" and in speaking of King William the Third, invariably termed him "a scoundrel?" If not irascible, he was certainly dictatorial, coarse, and sometimes almost impracticable. Those whom he could not always vanquish by the force of his intellect, by the depth and range of his arguments, and by the compass of his gigantic faculties, he silenced by rudeness; and I have, myself, more than once,

stood in the predicament which I here describe. Yet, no sooner was he withdrawn, and with him had disappeared these personal imperfections, than the sublime attainments of his mind left their full effect on the audience; for, such the whole assembly might be in some measure esteemed, while he was present. His beautiful compositions, both prose and poetical, the unquestionable benevolence and philanthropy of his character, his laborious and useful, as well as voluminous and toilsome productions, when added to his literary fame and pre-eminence;—all these combined qualities so overbore or subdued the few who ventured to contend with him, that submission or silence formed the only protection, and the ordinary refuge, to which they had recourse.

We never can enough regret, that a man who possessed such poetic talents as are displayed in his two imitations of Juvenal; “London,” and the “Vanity of Human Wishes;” should have neglected or avoided that branch of composition, in which he might have attained to such comprehensive eminence. If Pope’s imitations of Horace have more suavity, delicacy, and taste, than Johnson’s productions can boast; the latter breathe a spirit of sublime and severe morality, mingled with a philosophic grandeur of thought, which is equally captivating, as it is impressive and instructive. How admirable is his picture of *Charles the Twelfth*, as opposed to that of *Hannibal*! How fine is the comparison drawn between *Wolsey* and *Sejanus*! What can exceed the judgment shown in selecting *Charles the Seventh*, the Bavarian emperor of 1741, as opposed to the *Xerxes* of the Roman satirist! The English language offers, perhaps, nothing more chaste, correct, and yet harmonious, than these verses, which are free from any pedantry, or affectation of learning. The fact, however, is, that Johnson did not dare to yield to the seductions of the muse, or to abandon himself to the inspiration of poetry. He was compelled to restrain his efforts, and to limit them to the more temperate walk of prose, however capable he felt himself to be of emulating Addison, or Gray, or Pope. It is well known, that he was constitutionally subject to a melancholy,

morbid humour, which, advancing with his years, approached, on certain occasions, to something like alienation of mind. Well aware of this infirmity, he was apprehensive of its effects. Topham Beauclerk, who lived in great intimacy with him, often expressed to him the astonishment and regret, naturally excited by his apparent neglect of such poetic powers as nature had conferred on him. Johnson heard him in silence, or made little reply to these remonstrances. But, on Mr. Beauclerk’s making the same remark to Mr. Thrale, that gentleman immediately answered, that “the real reason why Johnson did not apply his faculties to poetry, was, that he dared not trust himself in such a pursuit, his mind not being equal to the species of inspiration which verse demands; though in the walk of prose composition, whether moral, philological, or biographical, he could continue his labours, without apprehension of any injurious consequences.”

If, nevertheless, after rendering due homage to his paramount abilities, which no testimony of mine can affect, I might venture to criticise so eminent a person, as having been deficient in any particular branch of information and polite knowledge, I should say that his deficiency lay in history. Boswell has very aptly compared his understanding to an intellectual mill, into which subjects were thrown, in order to be ground to atoms, or pulverized. And Mrs. Piozzi somewhere remarks, in better language than I can do it by memory, that “his mind resembled a royal pleasure garden, within whose ample dimensions every thing subservient to dignity, beauty, or utility, was to be found, from the stately cedar, down to the lowest plant or herb.” That this assertion, if loosely and generally taken, is perfectly just, no person can dispute, who knew him. That he was even thoroughly conversant in the modern history of Europe, for the last two or three centuries, is incontestable; and still less will it be denied, that he intimately knew all the classic periods of Greek and Roman story, most of which he had studied or perused in the original writers. But, these attainments he shared with many of his contemporaries. In the history of Europe during the middle ages, by which I mean, from the destruc-

tion of the Roman empire in the west, in the year 476, through the ten centuries that nearly elapsed before the revival of letters, I always thought him very imperfectly versed; if not, on some portions, uninformed and ignorant. To have compared his knowledge on these subjects, with the information which Gibbon, or which Robertson possessed, would have been an insult to truth. But, as far as I could ever presume to form an opinion, he was much below either Burke, or Fox, in all general historical information.

Even as a biographer, which constitutes a minor species of history, Johnson, however masterly, profound, and acute, in all that relates to criticism, to discrimination, and to dissection of literary merit; has always appeared to me to have wanted many essential qualities, or to have evinced great inaccuracy and neglect. I do not mean to speak of his prejudices and political partialities, which hardly allow him to do justice to Milton, or to Addison, because the one was in his principles a violent republican, and the other was a whig; just as he calls our great Hampden, "the zealot of rebellion:" prejudices so deeply rooted in his mind, as to induce him to maintain the moral superiority of Charles the Second over his late majesty King George the Second. I allude to errors that could only have arisen from an ignorance of facts, with which he might and ought to have been acquainted. What shall we say, when we find him telling us, that Stepney, the poet, was invited into public life by the Duke of Dorset?" The event in question must have taken place about 1683, towards the end of Charles the Second's reign. But, the creation of the dukedom of Dorset only originated under George the First, in 1720. In like manner he informs us, that Prior published about 1706, "a volume of poems, with the encomiastic character of his deceased patron, the *Duke of Dorset*." No doubt he means to speak of Charles, *Earl of Dorset*, who died nearly at that time. His mistakes, or his omissions and defect of information, in narrating the life of that distinguished nobleman, are much more gross. Johnson makes him succeed to James Cranfield, *second Earl of Middlesex*, in 1674, his uncle; who was already dead

many years antecedent. It was the *third Earl of Middlesex*, *Lionel*, to whose estates and title the Earl of Dorset succeeded, or was raised by Charles the Second. On all the interesting particulars of his marriages, his private life, and his decease, relative to which objects curiosity must be so naturally and warmly excited, the biographer is either silent or misinformed. I may be told that these inaccuracies, chiefly chronological, are of little moment. So is it, whether the great Duke of Marlborough died in 1722, or in 1723. But he who undertakes to compose an account of Churchill's life, is bound to know, and accurately to relate, all the leading facts that attended or distinguished it. Johnson, we may be assured, would have been, himself, the first to detect and to expose such errors in another writer.

Mrs. Thrale always appeared to me to possess at least as much information, a mind as cultivated, and more brilliancy of intellect, than Mrs. Montague; but she did not descend among men from such an eminence, and she talked much more, as well as more unguardedly, on every subject. She was the provider and the conductress of Johnson, who lived almost constantly under her roof, or more properly under that of Mr. Thrale, both in town and at Streatham. He did not, however, spare her more than other women, in his attacks, if she courted or provoked his animadversion. As little did he appear to respect or to manage Garrick, who frequently made one of the assembly. His presence always diffused a gaiety over the room; but he seemed to shrink from too near a contact with Johnson, whose superiority of mind, added to the roughness and closeness of his hugs, reduced Garrick to act on the defensive. Mrs. Carter, so well known by her erudition, the *Madame Dacier* of England; from her religious cast of character and gravity of deportment, no less than from her intellectual acquirements, was more formed to impose some check on the asperity or eccentricities of Johnson. Dr. Burney and his daughter, the author of "*Evelina*" and "*Cecilia*," though both were generally present; I always thought, rather avoided, than solicited notice. Horace Walpole, whenever he

appeared there, enriched and illuminated the conversation, by anecdotes, personal and historical; many of which were rendered more curious or interesting, from his having himself witnessed their existence, or received them from his father, Sir Robert Walpole. Sir Joshua Reynolds, precluded by his deafness from mixing in, or contributing to general conversation; his trumpet held up to his ear, was gratified by the attention of those who addressed to him their discourse; a notice which the resources of his mind enabled him to repay with interest.

Mrs. Chapone, under one of the most repulsive exteriors that any woman ever possessed, concealed very superior attainments, and extensive knowledge. Burke, though occupied in the toils of parliamentary discussion, and of ministerial attack, which left him little leisure to bestow on literary men or subjects; yet sometimes unbent his faculties among persons, adapted by nature to unfold the powers of delighting and instructing, with which genius and study had enriched him. His presence was, however, more coveted, than enjoyed. Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Shipley, afterwards married to Sir William Jones, might be frequently seen there. The Abbe Raynal, who passed that winter in London, was readily admitted, and eagerly courted. It must be confessed that the variety of his information, and the facility, as well as readiness, with which he communicated the stores of his exuberant memory, would have rendered him a valuable accession to any circle; but his loquacity generally fatigued even those whom it delighted and improved. The present Lord Erskine, who, thirty years later, attained to the great seal, had not yet commenced his career of jurisprudence. But the versatility of his talents, the energy of his character, and the vivacity of his conversation, sufficiently manifested, even at that time, the effect which such a union of qualities might produce, when powerfully urged and impelled towards one object. Happily for himself, he did not want the strongest impulse, arising from domestic pledges and embarrassments, well calculated to call out every

faculty of the mind. It is curious to reflect, that if he had been born one step higher; if, instead of being the younger son of a Scotch *Earl*, his father had been a *Marquis*, he never could have been called to the bar. His endowments, however great, assuredly would not, in any other profession, have raised him to the peerage, to fortune, and to fame. His celebrity, indeed, if we may believe Mr. Fox's biographer, had not extended across the Straits of Dover, even in 1802, when the Corsican first consul appears not to have known his name.

Mrs. Roscawen, though inferior in literary reputation to Mrs. Montague, and perhaps possessed of less general information, yet conciliated more good-will. She had an historical turn of mind; and in the course of a long life passed among the upper circles of society, she had collected and retained a number of curious or interesting anecdotes of her own times. Mr. Pepys, now Sir William Pepys, to whose acquaintance and partiality I was not a little indebted, for facilitating my entrance into this assembly of distinguished persons, is the last individual whom I shall enumerate. To a mind adorned with classic images, and conversant with classic authors, he united great colloquial powers. The friend of the first Lord Lyttelton, of Sir James Macdonald, and of Topham Beauclerk, he was in principle a staunch *whig*, and as Johnson might be justly esteemed a violent, as well as a bigoted *tory*, much political sparring occasionally took place between them, in the progress of which, many sparks of historical or philosophical fire were elicited on both sides.

Though literary reputation, or acknowledged talents and celebrity of some kind, seemed to constitute the primary title to a place in those conversations or societies, from which every species of play was altogether excluded; yet rank and beauty were to be found there, and contributed to render them interesting in the highest degree. The late Duchess Dowager of Portland, grand daughter of the lord treasurer Oxford, herself a woman of distinguished taste in various branches of art or *virtue*, was a frequent visitant. It was impossible to look on her, without reflecting that while still in

early childhood, she had formed the object of Swift's poetic attention, and been the subject of Prior's expiring muse. I have seen the Duchess of Devonshire, then in the first bloom of youth, hanging on the sentences that fell from Johnson's lips, and contending for the nearest place to his chair. All the cynic moroseness of the philosopher and the moralist, seem to dissolve under so flattering an approach; to the gratification and distinction resulting from which, he was nothing less than insensible. We may see in Boswell, how tractable, gentle, and accommodating he became, while at Inverary, seated between the Duke and Duchess of Argyle.

It is natural to ask, whether the literary society of London, at the period of which I am speaking, could enter into any competition for extent of talents, and superiority of attainments, with the society of Paris, that met at the apartments of Madame *du Deffand*, and of Mademoiselle *l'Espinasse*, under the reigns of Louis the Fifteenth and Sixteenth. In other words, whether the persons who formed the assemblies in the English capital, can support a comparison for ability and for fame, with those who were accustomed to meet in the French metropolis. If I may presume to give an opinion on this question, I should have no hesitation in saying, that neither in the period of its duration, nor in the number, merit, or intellectual eminence of the principal members, can the English society be held up on any parity, scarcely, indeed, in any comparison, with that of France. The latter assemblies may be said to have lasted near half a century, from 1725, or 1730, down to 1775, or 1780: either in the houses of Madame *du Deffand*, or of Mademoiselle *l'Espinasse*, or in both. The "blue stocking" assemblies at Mrs. Montague's and Mrs. Vesey's, remained in their brilliant state, only for about fifteen years, from 1770, to 1785. Before the last of those periods, Mrs. Vesey had yielded to the progress of time, and of infirmity; while Mrs. Thrale, then become Mrs. Piozzi, had removed from the banks of the Thames, to those of the Arno.

Mrs. Montague, indeed, survived; and her dinners, as well as her assem-

blies, were perpetuated to a very late period of her life; but the charm and the impulse that propelled them, had disappeared. They were principally supported by, and they fell with, the giant talents of Johnson, who formed the *nucleus*, round which all the subordinate members revolved. It became impossible, after his decease in 1784, to supply his place. Burke, as I have already observed, had more powerful avocations, and aspired to other honours and emoluments, than those which mere literary distinction could bestow on him. Hume and Adam Smith, men of superior endowments, who might have contributed to support such a society, had retired to Scotland, or were already dead. Robertson, Lord Kaimes, and Lord Monboddo, resided at Edinburgh; only visiting London occasionally, on business, or for recreation. Gibbon, I believe, never emulated to be a member of these assemblies, and never attended them. He, too, like Burke, looked more to politics, than to letters, for his substantial recompense; being at once a member of the house of commons, and a lord of the board of trade. Perhaps, indeed, the freedom of Hume's and of Gibbon's printed opinions on subjects connected with religion, might have rendered their admission difficult, or their society distasteful, to the principal persons who composed these parties; where nothing like a relaxation on points so serious found protection or support. Johnson, who, as we know, felt so great a repugnance to every species of scepticism on matters of religious belief, that when composing his Dictionary, he would not cite *Hobbes*, the celebrated philosopher, as an authority for any word or expression used by that writer, merely because he held *Hobbes's* principles in aversion;—Johnson, who blamed *Tyers*, for only doing justice to *Hume*, upon parts of his character wholly unconnected with his writings; and who said, that "he should just as soon have thought of praising a mad dog;"—he would hardly have remained in the same room with Hume and Gibbon; though when once taken by a sort of surprise, he did not refuse to dine in company with Wilkes; of whom nevertheless Boswell supposes him to say, judging from Johnson's

known prejudices, that "he would as soon dine with Jack Ketch, as with Jack Wilkes." It is, however, to be recollected, that Wilkes had designated the doctor, in a note subjoined to one of his printed letters, by the name of "*pen-sioner Johnson*."

The case was widely different in Paris, where no political pursuits distracted men of letters; and where infidelity, or even materialism, far from exciting alienation, would rather have conduced to recommend to notice the persons professing such tenets. Among the constellation of eminent men and women, who met at *Madame du Deffand's* and at *Mademoiselle l'Espinasse's*, the greater number were indeed avowedly "*des esprits forts*;" in other words, free thinkers, who not content with being so themselves, endeavoured to make proselytes by their writings. It is evident, therefore, that the circle in London was, from various causes, necessarily much more contracted than in France; where every person distinguished by talents, with few exceptions, commonly resided altogether in the capital. For Voltaire was virtually banished beyond the French confines, by the government; and lived in the territory of Geneva, more by constraint, than by choice or inclination. Rousseau was a Genevese by birth, who only visited Paris from time to time; sometimes indeed resident in its vicinity, but often a wanderer, proscribed and fugitive. After stating these facts, which may explain the causes of the superiority of the literary society, or assemblies of Paris, over those of London; it would be idle to contest that they altogether eclipsed ours, in almost every point of genius, science, and intellectual attainment. Who, in fact, met at *Mrs. Montague's*, or at *Mrs. Vesey's*, that can compete with the names of Maupertuis, Helvetius, Montesquieu, Fontenelle, Voltaire, Madame du Chatelet, the Marquis d'Argens, Mademoiselle de Launay, the President Henault, D'Alembert, Diderot, Condamine, the Duchess de Choiseul, Marmontel, Raynal, the Duke de Nivernois, Marivaux, the Abbé Barthélemi, Turgot, Condorcet, and so many other illustrious persons of both sexes, who composed the literati of the French metropolis?

We can scarcely be said to have any thing to oppose to such a cloud of eminent persons, except the single name of Johnson.

There seems, indeed, to be something in the national character of the French; at least there was so previous to the temporary extinction of the ancient monarchy, and the reign of Jacobinism, or military despotism; more congenial to these mixed assemblies of persons of literary endowments, than is found among us. From the middle of the seventeenth century, as long ago as the regency of Anne of Austria, we find that such meetings existed at Paris, and enjoyed a great degree of celebrity. The Hotel de Rambouillet, situate in the vicinity of the Louvre, constituted, as early as 1650, the point of reunion for all the individuals of both sexes, distinguished in the career of letters. Catherine de Vivonne (the Madame du Deffand of that period), Marchioness of Rambouillet, presided at them: an eminence for which she was qualified, by the elegance of her taste, and the superiority of her mind. In her house, which became a sort of academy, the productions of the time were appreciated, and passed in review. Dying in 1665, she was succeeded by Henrietta de Coligny, Countess de la Suze; who, though with inferior reputation, continued to assemble the wits and "*beau esprits*" at her hotel. Her high birth, her extraordinary beauty, and her poetic talents, attracted to her circle every person eminent in the metropolis. It was on her, that the four classic lines were composed:

"Quæ Dea sublimi vehitur per Inania Curru?
An Juno, an Pallas, an Venus ipsa venit?
Si Genus inspicias, Juno: si scripta, Minerva:
Si spectes Oculos, Mater Amoris erit."

Subsequent to her decease in 1673, these conversations seem to have languished for nearly fifty years, till they were revived and re-animated by the Duchess du Maine, a princess of the royal blood, grand-daughter of the great Condé, married to the Duke du Maine, natural son of Louis the Fourteenth. After her release from the castle of Dijon, to which fortress she had been committed prisoner by the Regent Duke of Orleans in 1717, for her participation in the conspiracy of

prince Cellamare ; about the year 1722, she began to assemble persons of literary celebrity under her roof, in whose society she passed the greater part of her leisure. These meetings, which were principally held, not in the capital, but at the palace of Seaux, about four leagues south of Paris, continued to exist down to the Duchess du Maine's decease, in 1753 ; and were attended by many of the persons of both sexes, who afterwards formed the circles at Madame du Deffand's, and at Mademoiselle l'Es-pinasse's apartments. During the same period of time, Madame de Tencin, sister to the cardinal of that name, one of the most captivating women in France, the *Aspasia* of that country, received at her hotel the "gens de lettres;" and may be said to have rivalled the Duchess du Maine, as the protectress of taste and polite knowledge. Madame de Tencin was mother of d'Alembert, who owed his birth to illicit love.

No meetings of a similar nature or description, appear to have existed in London, between the restoration of Charles the Second in 1660, and the conclusion of the seventeenth century, except the society that met at the house of the famous Hortensia Mancini, Duchess de Mazarin, niece to the cardinal of that name: who, from 1667, to the period of her death in 1699, was accustomed to receive at her apartments the *litterati* of both sexes. St. Evrémond, an exile, a foreigner, and a fugitive, like herself, constituted the principal support and the ornament of these parties ; where the Chevalier de Grammont, so well known by the Memoirs published under his name, was likewise to be found. It is curious to remark, that the first "Blue Stocking" assemblies, and I believe, the only meetings deserving that name, which have ever been held in London, down to those of which we have been speaking, were set on foot by natives of France, expatriated and resident here. For, neither the letters, nor the writings of Addison, Gay, Steele, Swift or Pope, indicate that any such meetings existed from 1700 down to the beginning of the present reign. Lady Wortley Montagu, Lady Hervey, the Duchess of Queensberry, and various other females distinguished by their talents, no less than by

their high rank, adorned that period of time ; but they do not appear to have emulated the line which Mrs. Montague so successfully undertook, though they occasionally received in their drawing-rooms, the wits and poets of the reigns of Queen Anne, of George the First, and George the Second. Foreigners have indeed with reason reproached the English, as too much attracted by the love of play, to clubs composed exclusively of men, to be capable of relishing a mixed society, where researches of taste and literature constitute the basis and the central point of union.

I quitted England in the summer of 1777, and made some stay at the Hague, where I was presented by our ambassador, Sir Joseph Yorke, to the Prince of Orange ; with whom I afterwards had the honour to sup at the "palace in the wood," as well as to meet him in private society. This prince has become so well known to us, since his precipitate retreat from Holland in the winter of 1795, by his long residence in England, that it is unnecessary to enter into any minute details relative to his character and qualities. Even at the period to which I allude, he neither inspired public respect, nor excited private regard. His person, destitute of dignity, corresponded with his manners, which were shy, awkward, and altogether unfitted to his high situation as stadtholder. If he displayed no glaring vices, he either did not, or could not, conceal many weaknesses, calculated to injure him in the estimation of mankind. A constitutional somnolency, which increased with the progress of age, was too frequently accompanied by excesses still more injurious, or fatal to his reputation : I mean those of the table, particularly of wine. I have seen him at the Hague, of an evening, in a large company, at Sir Joseph Yorke's, in the situation that I here describe. In vigour, ability, or resources of mind, such as might enable him successfully to struggle, like William the Third, with difficult or tumultuous times, he was utterly deficient. If William the Fifth had possessed the energies of that great prince, we should neither have been engaged in war with Holland, as happened towards the close of 1780 ; nor would the stadtholderate have

been overturned in 1795, and the Seven Provinces, which successfully resisted all the power of Philip the Second, have ultimately sunk into an enslaved province of the Corsican ruler of France.

The two brothers, John and Cornelius de Witt, became in every sense as formidable opponents to William the Third, in 1672, as Van Berkel and Neufville proved to his successor in the last century: but, William the Fifth allowed the French faction at Amsterdam, acting under the direction of Vergennes, to consolidate their strength, to conclude a treaty with the American insurgents, and to precipitate a rupture between the Dutch Commonwealth and England. His magnanimous predecessor, though he had scarcely then attained to manhood, opposed and surmounted all the efforts of the republican party, sustained by Louis the Fourteenth, with a view to subject Holland to French ambition. Van Berkel merited the fate which unjustly befell the two de Witts, and only escaped punishment by the inert and incapable conduct of the stadtholder, who permitted the fairest opportunity to pass, for calling him to public account, as a violator of the laws of nations, a disturber of the public peace, and an enemy to his own country. Relative to William the Fifth's personal courage, no opinion can be formed, as it was never tried; but he possessed neither the activity, nor any of the endowments fitted for the conduct of armies. It must however be admitted that his understanding was cultivated, his memory very retentive, his conversation, when unembarrassed, entertaining and even instructive, abounding with historical information that displayed extensive acquaintance with polite letters; and that he joined to a fine taste in the arts, particularly in painting, a generous protection of their professors. In a period of repose he might have been tolerated; but the stadtholderate, at every time since its commencement in the person of William the First, and the original revolt of the Low Countries from Philip the Second, has demanded the greatest energies in the individual who was placed at the head of the Dutch Commonwealth.

Nature, which rarely confers great or eminent qualities of mind in hereditary descent, seemed to have departed from

that rule in the house of Nassau-Orange; where she produced five princes in succession, all of whom were conspicuous in a greater or less degree, for courage, capacity, and the talents that insure or confirm political power. The five Roman emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, who succeeded each other in antiquity, were altogether unallied by ties of consanguinity. Adoption alone, cemented by matrimonial alliances, constituted the connection existing between them: and Commodus, whom we suppose to have been the son of Marcus Aurelius, the last of those five Cæsars, was only distinguished by his crimes or by his incapacity. William the First, and his two sons, though by different wives, Prince Maurice, and Frederic-Henry, who may be said to have successively occupied the office of Stadtholder, or Captain-General of the United Provinces, during four-score years, from 1567, to 1647, without interruption; were three of the most illustrious men whom we have seen in modern ages. Even William the Second, though his end was premature, and in some measure unfortunate, he having died in the flower of youth; yet manifested no less strength of character and vigour of mind, than his three predecessors. The whole existence of William the Third, from his twentieth year, down to the time of his dissolution, formed a perpetual display of fortitude, endurance, toil, and military, as well as civil exertion. With him expired, in 1702, the great line of Nassau-Orange. In 1747, the dignity and functions of stadtholder, which had been suspended for five and forty years, were revived in the person of William the Fourth, head of the branch of Nassau-Diëtz, collaterally related to the preceding race. However little favoured he might be by nature in his bodily formation, which was very defective, resembling our popular idea of Richard the Third; and however moderately endowed with intellectual powers was William the Fourth, who married the Princess Anne, daughter of George the Second; he at least maintained during the few years that he survived his elevation, an external dignity of deportment, and an irreproachable moral conduct. But in the hands of William the Fifth,

his son, may be said in every sense to have become eclipsed, that great office of stadtholder, in itself only less than royal; and under able management, perhaps even more formidable than the kingly dignity.

The reception of the late Prince of Orange, by George the Third, when he sought refuge in this country, from the French invasion, early in 1795; was no less affectionate, hospitable, and cordial, than the treatment which James the Second experienced in 1689 from Louis the Fourteenth. If James, justly expelled by his English subjects for tyranny, political and religious, was lodged at the castle of St. Germain, and treated with royal honours, by the French monarch; William was equally placed in the palace at Hampton Court. The princes of the royal family, and the nation at large, vied in demonstrations of respect, compassion, and attention towards him. The Princess of Orange, a woman of a far more elevated, correct and manly character than her husband, experienced as generous, and as kind a welcome, from the King and Queen of Great Britain, as Mary of Modena, the consort of James, received in France. Of a stature exceeding the height of ordinary women, she extremely resembled in her figure the late King of Prussia, Frederic-William the Second, her brother, who was cast by nature in the same Colossal mould. Fortune, which had persecuted her in Holland, did not prove more favourable to her in England. Her second son, Prince Frederic of Orange, a young man who had excited the liveliest expectations, and gave promise of many virtues, had entered into the Austrian service, after his father's expulsion from Holland. By his mother he was regarded with peculiar predilection, as formed to support the honour of the houses of Nassau and of Brandenburg, from both which he equally descended. Exemplary in the discharge of all his military duties, to this principle his premature death was to be attributed, which took place at Venice, in January, 1799; occasioned by a malignant distemper or fever, caught in consequence of visiting the sick soldiers confined in the hospitals of that city.

His Britannic Majesty first read the

account of it at the queen's house, in one of the French newspapers, on Thursday night, the 31st of January, 1799. Shocked at the intelligence, and not being quite sure of its authenticity, he put the newspaper in his pocket, and taking the queen aside, communicated it to her with much concern. As the probabilities were greatly in favour of its truth, or rather, as no doubt could reasonably be entertained on the point, they agreed not to delay announcing it to the Prince and Princess of Orange; who might otherwise receive so melancholy a notification through the channels of the English diurnal publications, or even from common fame. This determination they executed on the following day, at the queen's house, where they detained the prince and princess for two or three weeks, till the violence of the emotions occasioned by the loss of her son, had subsided. Some faint hopes, indeed, were entertained during eight or ten days after the arrival of the intelligence, that it might prove either premature or untrue. It was, however, soon fully confirmed. All mankind agreed that Prince Frederic eminently possessed talents, honour and courage. His unfortunate father, after arriving in this country under a dark political cloud, and after residing here many years, without acquiring the public esteem, or redeeming his public character, finally and precipitately quitted England under a still darker cloud; only to bury himself in the obscurity of Germany, there to expire, forgotten and almost unknown. Such has been the destiny in our time, of the representative of that august house, which in the sixteenth century, while it conducted the armies of Holland, opposed and humbled Spain; and which in the seventeenth century, affixed limits to the ambition of France, under Louis the Fourteenth! A Corsican adventurer has since enslaved, plundered, and conscribed during many years, the country over whose councils, Barneveldt, the two de Witts, and Heinsius, once presided; for which Van Tromp and Ruyter fought, conquered and fell; and where the spirit of freedom seemed to have animated every individual, when the Duke of Alva overran, and desolated those provinces. It is in making these reflections on the modern Dutch, and con-

trasting their conduct with the heroism of their ancestors, that we involuntarily exclaim with Goldsmith,

“Gods ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !”

At the time when I visited the Hague, in July, 1777, Prince Louis, one of the brothers of the then reigning Duke of Brunswic Wolfenbuttel, and commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces, enjoyed a much higher place in the public consideration than did the stadtholder. I have rarely seen in the course of my life a man of more enormous bodily dimensions. William, Duke of Cumberland, son of George the Second, whose corpulence was extreme, fell nevertheless far short of him in bulk. But, this prodigious mass of flesh, which it was natural to suppose, would enervate or enfeeble the powers of his mind, seemed neither to have rendered him indolent or inactive. The strength of his character, and the solidity of his talents, while they supplied in some measure the defects of the Prince of Orange, animated and impelled the vast machine that he inhabited. Prince Louis manifested no somnolency when in company ; nor was he ever betrayed at table into excesses injurious to his reputation. On the parade, and in his military capacity, he displayed equal animation and professional knowledge. Attached to the interests of the House of Orange, and to those of Great Britain, he became naturally obnoxious to the French faction in Holland ; which powerful party finally affected his removal from the post that he held in the service of the republic, and compelled him to retire out of the Dutch dominions, a few years later than the period of which I am speaking. He died, I believe, in 1788. His dismissal and departure prepared the way for the overthrow of the stadtholderate, notwithstanding the temporary triumph of the late Duke of Brunswic, and the capture of Amsterdam, effected in the summer of 1787 by the Prussian forces.

His brother, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswic, who commanded the allied army with so much reputation, during the “Seven Years War,” from 1757 down to 1763 ; and who occupied at that time so distinguished a rank in the history of

Europe ; proved himself unquestionably an able general, and a good tactician ; but he was by no means endowed with superior talents of any kind. In order to have secured the degree of fame that he had acquired in the field, it may be asserted that he ought not to have survived his last campaign ; precisely as Juvenal says of Marius, that he should have breathed his last, immediately after his victory over the Cimbri,

“Cum de Teutonico vellet descendere Curru.”

For, Prince Ferdinand soon afterwards abandoned himself to the doctrines and reveries of the *Illuminés* ; an association of men, who, it is well known, obtained such an ascendant about that time in Germany. They reduced his mind to a degree of imbecility which could only excite compassion. It will hardly be believed that before the year 1773, he was so subjugated by them, as frequently to pass many hours of the night in churchyards, engaged in evoking, and attempting to raise apparitions. They practised successfully on his credulity, making him conceive that he beheld spectres, or aerial forms. These occupations, which afforded sufficient proofs of intellectual decline, having impelled the great Frederic, whose sound understanding despised the *Illuminés*, to dismiss Prince Ferdinand from his situation in the Prussian service ; or, as Thiebault asserts in his “*Souvenirs de vingt Ans*” (which perhaps is more probable), the king having liberated from arrest an officer whom the prince had confined, he resigned. Which ever was the fact, he then retired to Magdeburgh, of the chapter of which secularized archbishoprick he was dean, or chief.

In that city he principally resided till the time of his decease, divested of any military command, living in a sort of retreat ; but keeping a good table, and receiving at dinner, strangers of condition who visited Magdeburgh. His income, a considerable part of which consisted in a pension from the crown of Great Britain, enabled him to maintain an establishment becoming his rank. An intimate friend of mine, now, I regret, no more ; who was about that time minister of England at the court of Dresden, Mr.

Osborn, being well acquainted with Prince Ferdinand, used frequently to dine with him. The prince, who treated him with great regard, wishing to make a proselyte of him, one day proposed that they should go together to a certain church-yard on that same night; promising him that a ghost would infallibly appear to them. Mr. Osborn agreed to accept the proposal, and to accompany his serene highness to the scene of these supernatural exhibitions, provided that he would order six grenadiers, their pieces loaded with ball cartridge, to attend them; and would enjoin the grenadiers to fire upon whatever object might assume the appearance of a ghost. But the prince by no means relished the idea, and the party therefore did not take place. Of the accuracy of this anecdote I can have no doubt, as it was related to me by Mr. Osborn himself, whose honour and veracity were indisputable. Prince Ferdinand continued till the period of his death, in July, 1792, to be a dupe and a convert of the *Illuminés*.

Sir Joseph Yorke, afterwards created Lord Dover, maintained a distinguished rank among the members of the corps diplomatique, in 1777, at the Hague. His table, splendid and hospitable, was open to strangers of every country. Educated under Horace, Lord Walpole, and under the first Lord Hampden, his manners and address had in them something formal and ceremonious; but, the vigilance and ability which he displayed during above five-and-twenty years that he was ambassador of England to the states-general, more than compensated for these defects of external deportment. Never, perhaps, at any period of modern time, except by Sir William Temple, under Charles the Second, were the interests of Great Britain so zealously, yet temperately sustained, as by him; for whom the stadtholder felt and expressed a sort of filial regard. In 1777, the English sovereign and nation still continued to preserve an ascendancy in the Dutch councils; till the augmenting misfortunes and accumulated disgraces of the American war, which finally enabled France to obtain a predominating influence, compelled Lord North to recall Sir Joseph Yorke from the Hague.

With another of his majesty's foreign

ministers, Mr. Wroughton, who became afterwards Sir Thomas Wroughton, I passed a considerable part of the summer of 1778, in the court and capital of Poland. Warsaw, destined to become in more recent periods, the theatre of carnage and revolution, then enjoyed a delusive calm; while Austria, Saxony and Prussia, were involved in war relative to the Bavarian succession. Wroughton, at the time of which I speak, was about forty six. He had been very handsome in his youth, and though grown somewhat corpulent, still preserved many of the graces, and much of the activity of that period of life. His education if it had not given him a very cultivated mind, had completely fitted him for the world; and a residence of more than twenty years at the two courts of Poland and Russia, in a public character, rendered his conversation upon all points connected with the history of the north of Europe, no less entertaining than informing. From him I learned a number of curious facts respecting the two Russian empresses, Elizabeth and Catherine; which though they assuredly would have been transmitted to posterity by *Brantome*, cannot, without violating decorum, be commemorated in the present age.

Sir Thomas Wroughton was sent, at three or four and twenty, to Petersburg, where he subsequently became British consul, during the reign of the former of those princesses. No man was better acquainted with her character, as well as with the political intrigues which distinguished the concluding years of Elizabeth's life. He assured me that she died a victim to her own excesses, and almost with a saucer of cherry brandy at her lips; it having been found impossible, by any injunctions of her physicians, to prevent the female attendants about her person and bed, from indulging her in this pernicious gratification. The last princess of the Stuart line who reigned in this country, has been accused of a similar passion, if we may believe the secret history of that time, or trust to the couplet which was affixed to the pedestal of her statue, in front of St. Paul's, by the satirical wits of 1714. The Empress Elizabeth's amours were such as the Messalinas and Faustinas of antiquity are asserted to have carried on in the

capital of the Roman world, without delicacy, shame or restraint. Suetonius might have found it difficult to relate, and Juvenal, as impossible to exaggerate, the particulars of Elizabeth's gallantries.

Of Catherine, Sir Thomas Wroughton always spoke with admiration and respect, though with freedom. To her notice he was indeed greatly indebted for his elevation in life; she having been instrumental in procuring him the appointment of consul to Petersburg. As he was in the flower of his age at that time, and of an imposing figure, he attracted her attention, and was honoured by her with such distinguishing marks of predilection, as to draw upon him the resentment of the grand duke, her husband; who, when he ascended the throne, early in 1762, by the name of Peter the Third, obtained, during his short reign, Wroughton's removal from Russia. He was then sent, by orders from his own court, to Dresden, as minister to Augustus the Third, Elector of Saxony, in his capacity of King of Poland; and he accompanied or followed that monarch from Saxony to Warsaw, in the last visit that Augustus made to his Polish dominions. As Wroughton had become an object of Peter's unconcealed dislike or jealousy, and as Catherine had distinguished him by personal attentions of the most flattering nature: it was not an improbable supposition, that she might have carried, to the utmost extent, her preference of him. But he always assured me, even in moments of the greatest confidence and unreserve, that he had never violated for an instant the limits of the most profound respect towards her; nor had ever received from her encouragement for such presumption on his part. "Count Poniatowski," said he, "was her lover. I was only her humble friend and servant."

He told me, that the first time he ever heard the name of Orloff mentioned, or ever saw the officer who afterwards became, as Prince Orloff, the avowed favourite of Catherine in every sense, was on the following occasion. Crossing the court of the winter palace at Petersburg, some time during the year 1760, the grand duchess, who leaned on his arm, pointed out to him a young man in the uniform of the Russian guards, then in

the act of saluting her with his spontoon; and added, "*Vous voyez ce beau jeune homme. Le connoissez-vous?*" Wroughton replied in the negative, "*Il s'appelle Orloff;*" said Catherine; "*Croiriez-vous qu'il a eu la hardiesse de me faire l'amour?*" "*Il est bien hardi, Madame,*" answered he, smiling. The conversation proceeded no farther; but it remained deeply printed upon Wroughton's recollection, who from that moment silently anticipated the future favour of Orloff. Sir Thomas Wroughton always spoke to me of Catherine's participation or acquiescence in the death of Peter the Third, as involuntary, reluctant, and the result of an insurmountable necessity. He even considered her knowledge of the destruction of the unfortunate Emperor Ivan, who was stabbed by his own guards at Schlüsselbourg, in 1764, with a view to prevent his being liberated by Mirowitsch, as exceedingly problematical. But he believed, in common with all Poland, that Catherine had found means to entrap, and to transfer to Petersburg, the Princess Tarrakanoff, a daughter of the Empress Elizabeth; where, as was asserted, she had perished in prison, by the waters of the river Neva entering the room in which she was confined. There can be no doubt that Alexis Orloff, so well known in the annals of Catherine's reign, who then commanded the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean; became on that occasion the instrument of her vengeance, or rather of her apprehensions, by enticing on board his ship, in the port of Leghorn, the unhappy female in question. This accusation, sustained by many strong facts and apparent proofs, narrated at great length, has since been submitted to the tribunal of Europe, in "*La Vie de Catherine Seconde,*" by Castera, published in 1797, soon after the empress's decease. Sir John Dick, who at the time of the supposed princess's seizure by Alexis Orloff, was British consul at Leghorn; is named in the work to which I allude, as having been an accomplice in the act of ensnaring, and carrying her off to the Russian admiral's ship. His wife is likewise charged with a participation in so foul a conspiracy.

I lived during several years in habits of familiar acquaintance with Sir John

Dick, who retained at fourscore, all the activity of middle life, together with the perfect possession of his memory and faculties. He was an agreeable, entertaining, and well bred man, who had seen much of the world. Dining in a large company, at Mr. Thomas Hope's, in Berkeley Square, on Sunday, the 10th of February, 1799, I sat by Sir John Dick; and well knowing his intimacy with Alexis Orloff, I inquired of him, where the count then was; "He is," answered Sir John Dick, "at present at Leipsic, from which place he wrote to me only three weeks ago. The Emperor Paul commanded him to travel, after having made him and Prince Baratinskoi, both of whom assisted in the termination of Peter the Third's life, assist likewise at the funeral ceremonies of that prince. They held the pall, and actually mounted guard over the body, in the church of the citadel of Petersburg; remaining the whole night with the corpse. Alexis went through this function with perfect composure." Encouraged by the frankness of this reply, I ventured to ask him, if he had read the narrative of the Princess Tarrakanoff's seizure, related in "*La Vie de Catherine Seconde*?" "I have certainly perused it," said he, "and not without some concern, as I am there accused by name, no less than my wife, of having been a party to the act of transporting, by violence, a young, unsuspecting, and innocent princess, on board the Russian fleet. I will relate to you, as a man of veracity, all the part that I took, and all I know, relative to the pretended princess in question; who is there asserted to have been a daughter of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, by Alexis Razoumoffsky.

"During the time that the Russian squadron lay in the harbour of Leghorn, in 1771, Alexis Orloff, who was the Admiral, resided frequently, if not principally, at Pisa, where he hired a splendid house. One morning, about eleven o'clock, a Cossack, who was in his service, and who acted as his courier, arrived at my door; charged with a message, to inform me that his master, with some company, in three carriages, meant to dine with me on that day. I accordingly ordered a dinner to be prepared for his reception. When he arrived, he brought

with him a lady, whom he introduced to my wife, and to myself: but he never named her, only calling her, "*Questa Dama*." She was by no means handsome, though genteel in her figure; apparently thirty years of age; and had the air of a person who had suffered in her health. There seemed something mysterious about her, which excited my curiosity, but which I could not penetrate. Considering her with attention, it struck me forcibly that I had seen her before, and in England. Being determined, if possible, to satisfy myself on this point, as we stood leaning against the chimney piece in my drawing-room, before dinner, I said to her, 'I believe, Ma'am, you speak English.' 'I speak only one little,' answered she. We sat down to dinner, and after the repast, Alexis Orloff proposed to my wife, and to another lady who was there present, to accompany him and the female stranger, on board his ship. They both declining it, Orloff took her with him in the evening. The boom or chain was then stretched across the harbour; but a boat came from the Russian admiral's ship, into which he put the lady, and accompanied her, himself, safe on board.

"On the ensuing morning, when Orloff came on shore, he proceeded to my house. His eyes were violently inflamed, and his whole countenance betrayed much agitation. Without explaining to me the cause or the reason of this disorder, he owned that he had passed a very unpleasant night; and he requested me to let him have some of the most amusing books in my library, in order to divert the lady who was on board his ship. I never saw her again: but, I know that soon afterwards, she was sent by Alexis, in a frigate, to Cronstadt; where, without being ever landed, she was transferred up the Neva, to the fortress of Schlussembourg, at the mouth of the lake Ladoga. Catherine there confined her, in the very room that Peter the Third had caused to be constructed, with intent to shut up herself in it. The lady unquestionably died in that prison of chagrin; but she was not drowned by the water of the Neva coming into her apartment, as is asserted in "*La Vie de Catherine Seconde*."

"Having stated to you," continued Sir

John Dick, "these circumstances, I will now inform you, who, and of what description, was the lady in question. Far from being, as is pretended, a daughter of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, her father was a baker of Nuremberg in Franconia. If, on this point, my testimony should appear to you doubtful or suspicious, the present Margrave of Anspach, who is in this country, and who knew her well, is ready to testify the same fact. She was a woman of pleasure during a short time, both in Paris, and here in London; at which last mentioned city she had picked up a few words of English. Prince Nicholas Radzivil, who was driven out of Poland by the Russians, having met with her, made her his mistress, and carried her with him into Italy. In order to revenge himself on Catherine, who had expelled him from his native country, and confiscated his immense estates in Lithuania, he resolved on calling her the Princess Tarrakanoff, pretending that she was Elizabeth's daughter. Such she was in fact considered to be by many who saw her; and the report acquiring strength, soon reached Petersburg. Catherine, naturally alarmed at the existence of a female pretender, who might lay claim to the very throne of Russia; and being informed that Prince Radzivil asserted her right to the empire, as a legitimate daughter of Elizabeth by Razoumoffsky, to whom she had been secretly married; thought that not a moment was to be lost, in securing the person of so dangerous a rival. She issued private orders therefore to Alexis Orloff, enjoining him to gain possession of the pretended princess, at all events, and by every possible means, either of money or of violence. To so great a height did the empress's apprehensions rise, that Orloff avowed to me, he had received the positive commands of her majesty, to pursue her even to Ragusa, if necessary; where it was understood she had retired; to demand her from the government of that small republic; and if they should refuse to give her up, to bombard the city, and to lay it in ashes. But Alexis found means to entrap, or to entice her, without either disturbance or hostility. He treated her as his mistress, while he resided at Pisa, and while she lay on board his ship at Leghorn. These

are all the particulars that I know relative to her, and all the share that I had in her detention, or her misfortunes."

It is probable that this recital, however natural and plausible it may appear, or however true it may be in point of fact, will nevertheless by no means carry conviction to every mind. I confess that it neither produced that sentiment in me, at the time when Sir John Dick related it; nor on the fullest consideration, am I thoroughly persuaded that the person in question, was not the daughter of Elizabeth. It seems to be universally admitted, and I have always been so assured, that the empress did privately espouse Razoumoffsky; that she had by him, between the years 1740 and 1745, various children; one of whom was brought up, and called the Princess or Countess Tarrakanoff. Prince Radzivil might, as is asserted in "*La Vie de Catherine Seconde*," have contrived means to carry her off; and after accompanying her to Rome, might there have quitted or deserted her. It is unquestionable, even by Sir John Dick's account, that Catherine dreaded her; and that Orloff by her orders, decoyed, ensnared, and made himself master of the person of this unfortunate female. But that in order to effect his base and barbarous purpose, Orloff actually married her, or pretended so to do; that she passed *several days* under Sir John Dick's roof, in amusement and dissipation; that "the consul, his wife, and the wife of rear Admiral Greig, took their seats by her in the barge, which conveyed her on board the Russian squadron;" finally, that a British consul would dishonour himself, his sovereign, and his nation, by openly facilitating so perfidious an act;—all these assertions of Castera, and many others relative to her treatment on board Orloff's ship, appear to me wholly undeserving of credit. They are, indeed, completely disproved by Sir John Dick's narrative to me, unless we suppose him utterly devoid of truth and honour. On the other hand, that he should have remained silent under such a charge, made in the face of all Europe, without attempting to repel, or to disprove it, in as public a manner as it was brought forward, seems almost like a negative admission of its veracity. His denial

of the accusation, given in private conversation to me, could not redeem his character to the world at large. Sir John, we may likewise remember, lay under personal obligations to Catherine the Second, who had conferred on him one of the Russian orders of knighthood; and from his connexion with whom, while Orloff lay at Leghorn with her fleet, he had derived great pecuniary advantages. The manner in which Alexis treated him, by bringing to his house a stranger, without previously soliciting permission : whom he never announced to Sir John, or to his wife by name ; and with whom he lived as his mistress ;—these facts seem to imply great subservience on the part of the British consul ; and will probably induce us to pause, before we give implicit belief to his assertions. I leave, however, the decision on this point to every man's own opinion.

But was the lady in question, the daughter of Elizabeth, or not ? It seems to me impossible, for want of evidence, to reply satisfactorily to the question. I confess, however, that I think it more probable she should have been, as Sir John Dick asserted, a German woman, whom Prince Radzivil had instructed, or induced, to assume the name and title of Princess Tarrakanoff. It is even very difficult altogether to condemn the Empress Catherine, for endeavouring to get possession of her person. For, had she passed over to Ragusa, and from thence into the Ottoman dominions, she would have been, when once in the hands of the Turks, with whom Russia was at war, a most dangerous competitor to the throne. We must recollect that Catherine herself had attained the imperial dignity by a revolution, and the consequent destruction of her husband, without any right of descent. To *her*, an impostress was nearly as formidable as a rightful pretender to the crown. The history of the false Demetrius, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, so famous in the Muscovite Annals, might justly inspire her with apprehension. Similar scenes might be renewed under her own reign, in the interior of that vast empire. Pugatcheff had long been considered, by a great part of the Russian people, as the Emperor Peter the Third. These con-

siderations must, at least in a political point of view, justify Catherine for taking measures to prevent the lady in question from being made an instrument in the hands of vindictive or ambitious individuals, to accomplish their projects of vengeance against herself. In the eyes of morality and of humanity, the whole reign and administration of that empress, however brilliant and imposing it may appear through the medium of Voltaire's, or of the Prince de Ligne's writings, cannot bear a close examination, or support a severe scrutiny.

The first Grand Duchess of Russia, Wilhelmina, Princess of Hesse Darmstadt, who, on her marriage with the Duke Paul, assumed the name of Natalia Alexiowna ; perished, like the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff, in the prime of life, and under circumstances that excited at the time much commiseration. I have seen the grand duchess in question, at the drawing-room at the palace of Peterhoff, in 1774, soon after her marriage. She had been chosen in preference to two of her sisters, who accompanied her on the journey from Germany to Russia. Those princesses must have been very deficient in personal attractions, if Paul's selection resulted from her superiority in that respect, above her sisters. I have rarely beheld a young person less favoured by nature. She had a scorbutic humour in her face, nor did her countenance indicate either intelligence or dignity ; but she was said to be amiable and pleasing in her manners. To the great joy of Catherine, as well as of the empire at large, which anxiously expected the birth of an heir, she became pregnant in 1775. That she died about two years subsequent to her marriage, during the confinement incident to her accouchement, is certain ; but the precise nature of her death is not well ascertained and produced various reports, some of which were injurious to the empress's reputation. I have, myself, heard them, while I resided at Vienna, from persons of the highest distinction, particularly from two princes of Hesse Philipstahl, within three or four years after the grand duchess's decease : but I believe they were not entitled to credit. It was likewise generally asserted that the princess in question had

formed a strong attachment for one of the handsomest, as well as most accomplished young nobleman about the court of Petersburg, with whom she had entered into a correspondence of a delicate description. The circumstance becoming known to Paul, occasioned him no ordinary uneasiness. A fact which seemed to give probability to the story, is that the nobleman himself to whom I allude, was then resident at Vienna; to which city he had been sent, as common fame affirmed, by Catherine, on the complaints of her son, immediately after the death of the unfortunate princess in question. I knew him very familiarly, while at Vienna. He since filled the post of envoy from the Empress of Russia, at an Italian court; where he was believed to have carried his temerity, and his success, even higher than he had done at Petersburg. Few men whom I have ever seen or known, were more formed by nature to be beloved by women. His figure was advantageous; his manners, though lofty, yet were gay and captivating, whenever he desired to conciliate good-will; and his countenance, which somewhat resembled that of a Calmuck, had in it, nevertheless, an air of great distinction, spirit, and intelligence. He had served in the Russian fleet, under Alexis Orloff; was present at the memorable victory of Tschismé, on the coast of Natolia, in 1770, where the Turkish squadron in that bay was destroyed: and had acquired, under Admirals Elphinstone and Greig, not only a knowledge of naval tactics, but of the English language likewise, which he spoke with admirable ease and fluency. The secret history of the imperial family of Russia, from the reign of Peter the First inclusive, down to the present time, has already furnished, and will, as it gradually becomes known, continue to afford matter of the most curious, as well as interesting nature. When we reflect that three emperors, Peter, Ivan, and Paul, have successively perished by violent means, within little more than half a century; and when we consider that this stupendous empire, embracing so vast a portion of the globe, has been governed almost exclusively by women, from the year 1725, down to 1796, including a space of more than seventy years;—

lastly, when we recollect that of the four females who have successively swayed the sceptre of Peter the Great, two, namely, Catherine the First and Second, were Germans or Livonians, unconnected except by marriage, with the ancient czars or sovereigns of Muscovy;—when we contemplate these facts, we cannot be surprised if this Asiatic empire, newly assimilated to our European monarchies and states, should present scenes altogether unlike the manners of London, Paris, or Vienna.

After the death of the grand duchess, Catherine was at least determined to lose no time in providing for her son a second wife. For this purpose, she applied, almost immediately subsequent to the decease of the unfortunate Natalia Alexiowna, to the great Frederic, King of Prussia, requesting him to select for Paul a German princess, to supply the vacancy occasioned in the imperial family. She even sketched out with her own hand the prominent qualities of person and of mind, which she considered as principally requisite in the object of his choice. This delicate commission Frederic executed with great ability; and, having fully ascertained the ground, he recommended the Princess Sophia of Wirtemberg to the empress, for her future daughter-in-law. It was perhaps impossible to have made a more judicious selection for such a dangerous eminence, which frequently conducted to a convent, to Siberia, or to a grave. She was not quite seventeen years of age; and she possessed, besides the graces of youth, personal attractions, well calculated to retain the grand duke's affections. Her understanding solid, and her deportment blameless, secured universal esteem; while, at the same time, she neither displayed such talents, energy of character, or ambition, as could render her an object of Catherine's apprehension. Paul, accompanied by Marshal Romanzoff, whose victories over the Turks have rendered him so justly celebrated, was sent by Catherine, in 1776, to Berlin; where Frederic, after contributing to procure him a wife, entertained him at Potsdam in the most splendid manner.

At one of these entertainments, given, if I recollect right, in the new palace near *Sans Souci*; in the midst of the

dinner, a large piece of the ceiling fell down on the table, involving the room and the company in dust, confusion, and astonishment: not unlike the accident which Fundanius relates as happening at Nasidienus's supper. The king, with admirable presence of mind, instantly throwing his arms round Paul, who sat next him, held the grand duke closely embraced, without suffering him to stir, till the cause, as well as the consequences of the disaster, were ascertained. When it was discovered to have arisen only from a defect in the plaster of the ceiling, and to have been altogether casual, a courier was immediately despatched to Petersburg, stating the particulars to Catherine; assuring her, at the same time, that her son was in perfect safety. We cannot help admiring the quickness of Frederic's perception, which, ignorant as he was from what cause so unusual and alarming an event originated, led him, without a moment's delay, to participate the danger and the misfortune, if such existed, with the grand duke. In fact, they must have perished together, if they perished at all. The malignity of mankind would unquestionably have suspected or attributed treachery of some kind, had any fatal accident, in which the king was not enveloped, befallen his guest. Frederic, by his promptitude, obviated the possibility of misrepresentation, either at Petersburg, or in any other of the courts of Europe.

During the first ten or fifteen years of the reign of Catherine the Second, it was commonly believed; and in Poland, where men ventured to state their opinions in conversation, with more freedom than they dared to do in Russia, I have heard it often maintained in private society, that the Grand Duke Paul would, sooner or later, disappear, as Peter the Third did in 1762, and as the unfortunate Emperor Ivan did in 1764. If Catherine had dreaded her son, such an event might have been not impossible: but she knew him, and did not fear him. The strongest mark of her superiority to all apprehension from his machinations, or efforts to ascend the Russian throne before his time, was the permission which she gave him to travel over Germany, France, and Italy. Peter the First never extended such a degree of emancipation to his son,

Czarowitz Alexis. Paul was accompanied on his tour by the grand duchess, for whom he then manifested the utmost fondness; though the testimonies which he gave her of his affection, were not always regulated by delicacy or propriety. Sir William Hamilton told me, that when Paul arrived at Naples in 1782, he had the honour to accompany the grand duke and duchess on their excursions round that city, in order to view Portici, Pompeii, and the other principal objects of curiosity visited by travellers. "The first time," said Sir William, "that I was with them in a coach, we had not proceeded far, when Paul, as if unconscious that I was present, throwing his arms about the grand duchess, began to kiss her with as much warmth, as he could have shown if they had been alone and newly married. I was somewhat embarrassed at this unusual display of matrimonial attachment, hardly knowing which way to direct my view; for there was no other person with us in the carriage: and as I sat opposite to their imperial highnesses, I could not easily avoid seeing all that passed, though I affected to look through the glass at the objects without. At length, the grand duke addressing himself to me, said, '*Monsieur le Chevalier, j'aime beaucoup ma femme.*' It was impossible not to credit the assertion, after the proofs which he had just exhibited. But we had not proceeded a mile further, when he recommenced the same demonstrations of attachment, which he repeated many times before we arrived at Portici: usually observing to me, each time, '*Vous voyez que j'aime beaucoup ma femme.*' I could only express my satisfaction at his felicity, concealing my astonishment at the testimonies of it which I had witnessed." It would have been happy for this violent and infatuated prince, if he had never ascended the Russian throne, but had always continued in the state of political annihilation to which his mother had reduced him, and in which she retained him to the end of her life.

The pretended Princess Tarrakanoff and the first Grand Duchess of Russia, were not the only females of high rank, who expired by a premature death, under Catherine's reign. Augusta Caroline,

eldest daughter of the late celebrated Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbützel, who fell at Auërstadt in 1806, is supposed to have perished in a manner equally mysterious. This princess, who was born towards the end of the year 1764, before she attained the age of sixteen, was married to the Prince of Wirtemberg, since elevated by Bonaparte to the dignity of a king. He was then about twenty-six years old, and might be considered as eventual presumptive heir to his uncle, the reigning Duke of Wirtemberg, Charles Eugene, who had no issue. When I was at the court of Brunswick, in the autumn of 1777, at which time the princess was near thirteen, I saw her more than once in the apartments of her mother. She had a very fair complexion, light hair, pleasing features, and an interesting figure. Some years after her marriage, she accompanied the prince her husband into Russia, when he entered into the military service of that crown; to the heir of which, as has been already stated, his sister was married. They resided during some time at Petersburg, or in other parts of the Russian empire; but in 1787 he quitted Catherine's service and dominions; leaving his wife behind, of whose conduct, it was asserted, he had great reason to complain. They had then three children living, two sons and a daughter, whom the empress permitted him to take away, when he withdrew from her employ; but she retained the princess under her own protection. At the end of a year or two, it was notified to the Prince of Wirtemberg, as well as to the Duke of Brunswick, by order of the empress, that the consort of the one, and the daughter of the other, was no more. The duke, her father, immediately demanded in most pressing terms, that her body might be delivered up to him: but this request was never granted, nor did he even receive any such authentic proofs of her decease, and still less of the circumstances attending it, as could satisfy him on the subject. Doubts were not only entertained whether she died a natural death, but it remained questionable whether she did not still survive, and was not existing in Siberia, or in the Polar Deserts; like many other illustrious exiles of her own family, who had been banished thither by the em-

press Elizabeth, when she ascended the throne in 1741, on the deposition of Ivan.

In May, 1797, the Princess Royal of England was married to the Prince of Wirtemberg; who, before the conclusion of that year, became duke, by the decease of Frederic Eugene his father. Early in the summer of 1798, a gentleman, conversing with me on the subject of the first Princess of Wirtemberg's death, assured me that he had seen and perused all the papers relative to her imprisonment and decease; which at the desire of the prince himself, and by his authority, had been transmitted to George the Third; who, after a full inspection of them, became perfectly convinced of his having had no part, direct or indirect, in that dark and melancholy transaction.

"Frederic William, reigning Duke of Wirtemberg," said he, "entered when young, as is well known, into the Prussian service. Old Frederic liked and distinguished him. Wishing to attach him to the house of Brandenburg by permanent ties, and considering him as a man of promising abilities, the king himself set on foot, and finally concluded his marriage with the eldest daughter of his own favourite nephew and general, the Duke of Brunswick. This event took place in 1780. About five years afterwards, Frederic being disposed to form a second alliance with the family of Wirtemberg, by marrying his great nephew, the present King of Prussia, as soon as his age would allow, with the Princess Elizabeth, sister to the prince; despatched him to Petersburg for that purpose. His instructions were, to apply to his sister the grand duchess, for the exertion of her influence at the court of Stuttgart, in order to prevail on the duke to promise his niece to the eventual heir of the Prussian monarchy. This negotiation was however rendered unsuccessful by the demand which the Emperor Joseph the Second made about the same time, of the Princess Elizabeth of Wirtemberg, for his nephew, Francis, hereditary Prince of Tuscany, now Emperor of Austria; a marriage which was actually accomplished early in 1788.

"When the Prince of Wirtemberg arrived in the capital of the Russian empire, this Austrian alliance was already set-

tled; or at least, was too far advanced in its progress, to be overturned by his interference. After making, therefore, every effort in his power, through the grand duchess, to prevent its accomplishment; and finding these exertions fruitless, he returned to Potsdam. Whether Frederic suspected any duplicity or insincerity on his part; or whether it was the result merely of disappointment; it is certain that he received the prince very coldly: and the Empress of Russia having soon afterwards invited him into her service, he quitted that of Prussia, and revisited Petersburg. She employed him in the war that began in 1787 against the Turks; and he commanded one of the three armies which took the field. The van, consisting of forty thousand men, was entrusted to him. He is said to have displayed great military talents, to have distinguished himself much, and to have rendered essential services to Catherine.

"At the time that he entered the Russian service, he carried the princess, his wife, with him to Petersburg, as well as the two sons and daughter which she had brought him. Being in the flower of her youth, endowed with many amiable qualities of mind and of deportment, she soon became a favourite of Catherine; in whose society and intimate confidence she occupied a distinguished place. It can hardly however excite astonishment, that such an intercourse should have been calculated to corrupt her morals. The court and palace of the empress were scenes of dissipation and licentiousness. Yet, when the prince went to serve against the Turks, he, of necessity, left his wife exposed to all these temptations. In effect, during his absence, she conducted herself so imprudently, that when he returned after the conclusion of the campaign, to Petersburg, he found himself forced to adopt some strong measures respecting her. Being placed in this painful situation, he wrote to her father the Duke of Brunswick, informing him of his daughter's misconduct, and consulting him on the mode of action proper to be pursued under those circumstances. It was agreed between them, that as a preliminary step, she should be removed out of Russia; and the prince accordingly demanded Catherine's

permission to quit her dominions, together with his wife and family. The empress allowed him to retire, and to take with him his children; but she peremptorily refused to permit him to carry his consort back to Germany. All remonstrance proving vain, the princess therefore remained behind, and he quitted Petersburg with his sons and daughter, to return to Wirtemberg.

"About a fortnight after his departure, the princess, without any reason assigned, was sent by order of Catherine, to the castle of Lhode, about two hundred miles from Petersburg; but in what part or province of that vast empire, I am unable to assert. There it seems, under close confinement, she remained about eighteen months: but all her German attendants, male and female, were withdrawn from her. At the end of that time, the prince received letters from the empress, informing him that his wife was dead of a *hemorrhage*. Similar information was conveyed by Catherine to the Duke of Brunswick, the unfortunate princess's father. No particulars were stated; nor, as far as appears, were any other circumstances ever known respecting her. Thus situated, the Duke of Brunswick, conscious that he could neither bring his daughter to life, nor call the empress to account, acquiesced patiently in the calamity: but during some years, he did not communicate to the duchess his wife, the intelligence of her daughter's death. She therefore remaining in ignorance of the catastrophe, continued to believe that the princess was still confined at Lhode, or existing somewhere in the deserts of Russia. The duchess used even to speak of her, as being alive in Siberia; and this fact will account for the universality of the report."

If the account given me by Sir John Dick, relative to the supposed Princess Tarrakanoff, left many circumstances obscure and unexplained in the history of that female; it must be owned that, after considering this narrative, no less uncertainty still pervades the story of the Princess of Wirtemberg. It is natural to ask, why did Catherine cause the princess to be imprisoned? Her gallantries, however culpable or notorious they might be, yet constituted no crime against the Empress of Russia; who exhibited

in her own conduct, an example of emancipation from all restraint and decorum on the article of female irregularities of deportment. It was the prince her husband, whom she had dishonoured and incensed. What proof is adduced, except assertion, that he did not know of the intentions of Catherine to confine and banish her? In the case of the two emperors, Peter the Third, and Ivan; as well as in the instance of the pretended Princess Tarrakanoff; the motives which might impel her to deprive them of life, are obvious. But none such appear in the instance before us. There are, moreover, other particulars which may lead us to hesitate in forming a decisive opinion on the subject. The death of the princess of Wirtemberg at Lhode, was announced and stated in all the German almanacs, printed by authority, to have taken place on "the 27th September, 1788." Her husband remained a widower near eight years after that event, before he aspired to the hand of the Princess Royal of Great Britain. During so long a period of time, he seems to have adopted no measures for repelling the calumnious reports circulated all over Europe; reports which, however false (and such I esteem them to have been), yet had made the most unfavourable impression even in England. George the Third became, indeed, perfectly convinced of his innocence, before he consented to the union of the prince with his eldest daughter. But, though the king yielded to the undeniable proofs brought upon this point, yet from paternal fondness or solicitude, he did it with reluctance. So far, indeed, was he from pushing forward the alliance, that I know, from good authority, he offered the princess, after all the preliminaries were adjusted, and the marriage was fixed, to break it off, if she chose to decline it, taking on himself personally, the whole responsibility of its failure. Over the precise nature of the first princess of Wirtemberg's illness and death, a deep or impenetrable veil is drawn. We must leave it to time to unfold, if it does not rather remain, as is more probable, forever problematical.

Before I quit this subject, I cannot help remarking, that during the course of the eighteenth century, the family of

Brunswic, in its different branches, produced no less than five princesses, who exhibited in succession, the most conspicuous examples of human infelicity. The first of them was Sophia of Brunswic Zell, married to George the First; who, for her alleged, but unproved gallantries with Count Konigsmark, was confined during near forty years, at the sequestered seat or castle of Ahlden, in the electorate of Hanover, where she expired in 1726. Charlotte-Christina of Brunswic *Blanckenberg*, who espoused, in 1711, the Czarowitz Alexis, only son of Peter the Great; a princess endowed by nature with almost every amiable and estimable quality of body and of mind; equally beautiful and virtuous; fell a victim, in the flower of her youth, to the ferocious treatment that she experienced from her husband. She died at Petersburg, in child-bed, at twenty-one years of age, in 1715; or at least, she disappeared:—for her death has been contested in the strongest manner; lamented by the whole empire, except by Alexis, whose brutal character rendered him incapable of appreciating her value. Brunswic *Wolfenbuttel* furnished the next instance, in the person of Elizabeth, married in 1765, to the late King of Prussia, then only prince royal; divorced four years afterwards for her irregularities; confined at Stettin, where I have seen her in 1774; and relative to whose private history I could state from high authority the most minute as well as curious particulars, if I were not restrained by motives of respect and delicacy towards the illustrious persons who are connected with her by descent or by alliance. I believe she still survives, forgotten and unknown, in some part of the Prussian dominions; after having witnessed the temporary subversion of her own house, and the calamities inflicted on that of Brandenburg, by Bonaparte. Caroline Matilda of Brunswic *Lunenburgh*, posthumous daughter of Frederic, late Prince of Wales, and sister of George the Third, is the fourth in this enumeration. To her I had the honour of being well known, have dined frequently at her table, and was employed by her during the year preceding her decease, in conducting negotiations of the deepest importance to her future

greatness, as well as felicity. Banished by a revolution, from Denmark in 1772, effected in the name of Christian the Seventh, her imbecile husband ; she only survived it about three years, terminating her short career, in the prime of life, at Zell, in 1775. Augusta Caroline of Brunswic *Wolfenbuttel*, whose melancholy history, and whose ambiguous end, we have been surveying, continues, but does not terminate the list. It must be esteemed singular, that in the lapse of scarcely a hundred years, such a fatality should seem to have marked and still to pursue, so many females of that illustrious family.

In the autumn of 1778, I visited Dresden for the second time : a court which was rendered peculiarly agreeable to the English at that period, by the hospitality and polished manners of his majesty's minister to Saxony, Sir John Stepney ; one of the finest gentlemen who have been employed on foreign missions during the course of the present reign. Dresden was then a place where the *illuminés* had made a deep and general impression on the public mind ; Schrepfer having chosen it, only a few years earlier, for the scene of his famous exhibition of the apparition of the Chevalier de Saxe. Having given in a former work some account of that extraordinary imposition, I shall not resume the subject here ; but I cannot help relating another somewhat similar story, which was told me during my residence in Dresden, by the Count de Felkesheim. He was a Livonian gentleman, settled in Saxony, of a very improved understanding, equally superior to credulity as to superstition. Being together on an excursion of pleasure, in the month of October, 1778, and our discourse accidentally turning on the character and performances of Schrepfer ; " I have conversed," said he to me, " with several of the individuals who were present at the scene of the sceptre or phantom, presented by him in the gallery of the palace of the Duke of Courland. They all agreed in their account of the leading particulars. Though I do not pretend to explain by what process or machinery, that business was conducted, I have always considered him as an artful impostor, and his audience as dupes. Yet am I not so deci-

dedly sceptical on the possibility of supernatural appearances, as to treat them with ridicule, because they may seem to be unphilosophical. I received my education in the University of Königsberg, where I enjoyed the advantage of attending lectures in ethics and moral philosophy, delivered by a professor who was esteemed a very superior man in those branches of science. He had, nevertheless, though an ecclesiastic, the reputation of being tinctured with credulity on various points connected with revealed religion. When, therefore, it became necessary for him in the course of his lectures, to treat on the nature of spirit, as detached matter ; to discuss the immortality of the soul ; and to enter on the doctrine of a future state ; I listened with more than ordinary attention to his opinions. In speaking of all these mysterious subjects, there appeared to me to be so visible an embarrassment, both in his language and his expressions, that I felt the strongest curiosity to question him further respecting them. Finding myself alone with him soon afterwards, I ventured to state to him my remarks on his deportment, and I entreated him to tell me if they were well founded, or only imaginary suggestions."

" The hesitation which you noticed," answered he, " resulted from the conflict that takes place within me, when I am attempting to convey my ideas on a subject where my understanding is at variance with the testimony of my senses. I am, equally from reason and reflection, disposed to consider with incredulity and contempt, the existence of apparitions. But, an appearance which I have witnessed with my own eyes, as far as they, or any of the perceptions can be confided in ; and which has even received a sort of subsequent confirmation, from other circumstances connected with the original fact, leaves me in that state of scepticism and suspense which pervaded my discourse. I will communicate to you its cause. Having been brought up to the profession of the church, I was presented by Frederic William the First, late King of Prussia, to a small benefice situated in the interior of the country, at a considerable distance south of Königsberg. I repaired thither, in order to take possession of my living ;

and found a very neat parsonage house, where I passed the night in the bed-chamber which had been occupied by my predecessor. It was in the longest days of summer; and on the following morning, which was Sunday, while lying awake, the curtains of the bed being undrawn, and it being broad daylight, I beheld the figure of a man, habited in a sort of loose gown, standing at a reading desk, on which lay a large book, the leaves of which he appeared to turn over at intervals. On each side of him stood a little boy, in whose faces he looked earnestly from time to time; and as he looked, he seemed always to heave a deep sigh. His countenance, pale and disconsolate, indicated severe distress of mind. I had the most perfect view of these objects; but, being impressed with too much terror and apprehension to rise, or to address myself to the appearances before me, I remained, for some minutes, a silent and breathless spectator, without uttering a word, or altering my position. At length the man closed the book, and then taking the two children, one in each hand, he led them slowly across the room; my eyes eagerly following him, till the three figures gradually disappeared, or were lost behind an iron stove, which stood at the farthest corner of the apartment.

"However deeply and awfully I was affected by the sight which I had witnessed, and however incapable I was of explaining it to my own satisfaction, yet I recovered sufficiently the possession of my mind to get up; and having hastily dressed myself, I left the house. The sun was long risen, and directing my steps to the church, I found that it was open; but, the sexton had quitted it, and on entering the chancel my mind and imagination were so strongly impressed by the scene which had recently passed, that I endeavoured to dissipate the recollection, by considering the objects around me. In almost all the Lutheran churches of the Prussian dominions, it is an established usage to hang up against the walls of some part of the building, the portraits of the successive pastors or clergymen who have held the living. A number of these paintings, rudely performed, were suspended in one of the aisles. But I had no sooner fixed my eyes on the last

in the range, which was the portrait of my immediate predecessor, than they became rivetted to the object; as I instantly recognized the same face which I had beheld in my bed-chamber, though not clouded by the same deep expression of melancholy or distress.

"The sexton entered as I was still contemplating this interesting head, and I immediately began a conversation with him, on the subject of the persons who had preceded me in the living. He remembered several incumbents, concerning whom, respectively, I made various inquiries, till I concluded by the last, relative to whose history I was particularly inquisitive." "We considered him," said the sexton, "as one of the most learned and amiable men who have ever resided among us. His charities and benevolence endeared him to all his parishioners, who will long lament his loss. But he was carried off in the middle of his days, by a lingering illness, the cause of which has given rise to many unpleasant reports among us, and which still forms matter of conjecture. It is however commonly believed that he died of a broken heart." My curiosity being still more warmly excited by the mention of this circumstance, I eagerly pressed him to disclose to me what he knew or had heard on the subject. "Nothing respecting it," answered he, "is absolutely known; but scandal had propagated a story of his having formed a criminal connexion with a young woman of the neighbourhood, by whom, it was even asserted, that he had two sons. As a confirmation of the report, I know that there certainly were two children, who have been seen at the parsonage; boys of about four or five years old. But they suddenly disappeared, some time before the decease of their supposed father; though to what place they are sent, or what is become of them, we are wholly ignorant. It is equally certain, that the surmises and unfavourable opinions formed respecting this mysterious business, which must necessarily have reached him, precipitated, if they did not produce, the disorder of which our late pastor died: but he is gone to his account, and we are bound to think charitably of the departed."

"It is unnecessary to say with what

emotions I listened to this relation, which recalled to my imagination, and seemed to give proof of the existence, of all that I had seen. Yet, unwilling to suffer my mind to become enslaved by phantoms which might have been the effect of error or deception, I neither communicated to the sexton the circumstance which I had just witnessed, nor even permitted myself to quit the chamber where it had taken place. I continued to lodge there, without ever again witnessing any similar appearance; and the recollection itself insensibly began to wear away as the autumn advanced. When the approach of winter rendered it necessary to light fires through the house, I ordered the iron stove that stood in the room, behind which, the figure which I had beheld, together with the two boys, seemed to disappear, to be heated for the purpose of warming the apartment. Some difficulty was experienced in making the attempt, the stove not only smoking intolerably, but emitting a most offensive smell. Having, therefore, sent for a blacksmith to inspect and repair it, he discovered in the inside, at the farthest extremity, the bones of two small human bodies, corresponding perfectly in size, as well as in other respects, with the description given me by the sexton, of the two boys who had been seen at the parsonage. This last circumstance completed my astonishment, and appeared to confer a sort of reality on an appearance, which might otherwise have been considered as a delusion of the senses. I resigned the living, quitted the place, and returned to Königsberg: but it has produced upon my mind the deepest impression, and has, in its effects, given rise to that uncertainty and contradiction of sentiment which you remarked in my late discourse." Such was Count Felkesheim's story, which, from its singularity appeared to me deserving of commemoration, in whatever contempt we may justly hold similar anecdotes.

One of the most interesting portions of my life, was the time that I passed at Naples, in the summer of 1779. Sir William Hamilton, his majesty's minister, constituted in himself the greatest source of entertainment, no less than of instruction, which that capital then af-

forded to strangers. He honoured me with his friendship, which he continued to the end of his life. In his person, though tall and meagre, with a dark complexion, a very aquiline nose, and a figure, which always reminded me of *Rolando* in "*Gil Blas*;" he had nevertheless such an air of intelligence, blended with distinction in his countenance, as powerfully attracted and conciliated every beholder. His mother, Lady Archibald Hamilton, enjoyed, as is well known, a very distinguished place in the favour of Frederic, late Prince of Wales; and Sir William himself was brought up from early life, with his present majesty, to whom he became, after his accession to the crown, an equerry. At a very early period he entered into the army, and was at the battle of Fontenoy, as well as, I think, at that of La Feldt.

The versatility of Sir William Hamilton's character, constituted one of the most interesting features of his composition. Endowed with a superior understanding, a philosophic mind, and a strong inclination to the study of many branches of science, or of polite letters, which he cultivated with distinguished success; he was equally keen as a sportsman, in all the exercises of the field. After being actively occupied in studying the *Phænomena* of *Vesuvius*, like the elder *Pliny*; or in exploring the antiquities of *Pompeii* and of *Stabia*, with as much enthusiasm as *Pausanias* did those of ancient Greece; he would pass whole days, and almost weeks, with the King of Naples, either hunting or shooting in the royal woods; or more laboriously engaged in an open boat, exposed to the rays of a burning sun, harpooning fish in the bay of *Castellamare*. When beyond seventy years of age, he preserved undiminished his love of these sports, particularly of fishing, which he followed with great ardour; thus mingling pursuits or passions of the mind and of the body, rarely united in the same man. I have seen him, not more than two years before his decease, perform the "*Tarentella*;" an Apulian dance, which, as it is undoubtedly a copy of the Bacchant Amusements of antiquity, demanded no slender portion of animal strength and spirits. The occasion was so remarkable, that I am induced to relate the par-

ticulars. Intelligence of the glorious victory obtained by the English fleet under Lord Nelson, before Copenhagen, arrived in London, on Wednesday, the 15th of April, 1801. Sir William Hamilton then resided opposite the Green Park, in Piccadilly. About ten o'clock that evening, I went to his house with Sir John Macpherson. We found assembled there, the Dukes of Gordon and Queensberry, Lord William Gordon, Monsieur de Calonne, Mr. Charles Greville, Sir William's nephew;" the Duke de Nöia, a Neapolitan nobleman; Mr. Kemble, the celebrated comedian, and his wife; the Reverend Mr. Nelson, now earl of that name, with some other persons. Lady Hamilton, inspired by the recent success of Lord Nelson against the Danes, of which victory he had transmitted her, with his remaining hand, all the particulars as they occurred, from the 1st, up to the 8th of April, the day when despatches came away; after playing on the harpsichord, and accompanying it with her voice, undertook to dance the "Tarentella."

Sir William began it with her, and maintained the conflict, for such it might well be esteemed, during some minutes. When unable longer to continue it, the Duke de Nöia succeeded to his place: but he too, though near forty years younger than Sir William, soon gave in, from extenuation. Lady Hamilton then sent for her own maid servant; who, being likewise presently exhausted, after a short time another female attendant, a Copt, perfectly black, whom Lord Nelson had presented her, on his return from Egypt, relieved her companion. It would be difficult to convey any adequate idea of this dance; but the *Fandango* and *Seguedilla* of the Spaniards, present an image of it. Madame de Staël has likewise attempted to describe it, and has made "Corinna" perform it at a ball in Rome, with the Prince of Amalfi, a Neapolitan, for her partner: but she has softened down the voluptuous features that render it too powerful over the imagination and the senses. Yet she admits the "Melange de Pudeur et de Volupté," inherent in the exhibition, which conveyed an idea of the Bayadères or Indian dancing girls. Madame de Staël's "Corinna" could not be more

familiar with the attitudes of the antique statutes, than was Lady Hamilton; nor more capable of transporting the spectators to the Vatican palace, or to the Medicean gallery at Florence, by her accurate and picturesque imitation of the models there preserved, with which she seems at times to identify herself. Castagnettes, and the Tambour de Basque, constitute essential accompaniments of the performance; which, at its termination, from the physical exertions necessary, left her in a state of dissolution, like the Delphic priestess, overcome by the inspiration of Apollo; or perhaps, more like Semelé, as Corregio has painted her after her interviews with Jove. We must recollect that the two performers are supposed to be a satyr and a nymph; or rather, a fawn and a bacchant. It was certainly of a nature not to be performed except before a select company; as the screams, attitudes, starts, and embraces, with which it was intermingled, gave it a peculiar character.

I here mention it, principally in order to show Sir William Hamilton's activity and gaiety at that advanced period of life. Though a finished courtier, he preserved such an independence of manner, without any mixture of servility or adulation, as seemed eminently to qualify him for the diplomatic profession. His conversation offered a rich diversity of anecdote. With these qualifications, it cannot excite wonder that he formed the delight and ornament of the Court of Naples. No foreign minister, not even the *family* ambassadors of France and Spain resident there, enjoyed in so eminent a degree, the favour or affection of his Sicilian majesty. Nor was the attachment of that prince to Sir William, merely limited to hunting or fishing parties. He gave the English envoy many solid proofs of sincere regard; a regard that extended to the British crown and nation. One striking instance of this partiality took place in June, 1779, while I was at Naples. The King of Spain, Charles the Third, having written confidentially to his son Ferdinand, that he should probably be induced soon to take part with Louis the Sixteenth, by entering into a war with Great Britain, as he effectively did immediately afterwards; the King of Naples, though enjoined by

his father to secrecy, communicated the letter itself to Sir William Hamilton. He even accompanied the disclosure, with the assurance of his deep regret at the adoption of such a line of policy; and his own firm determination never to enter into the hostile combination against England, though himself a prince of the House of Bourbon, and included in "the family compact" by name. Sir William transmitted the king's communication, as well as his assurance on the point, without delay to Lord North, then first minister. I received this anecdote from himself at Naples.

It was in Sir William's, and the first Lady Hamilton's company, that I learned a number of curious, as well as authentic particulars, relative to the King and Queen of Naples. Ferdinand the Fourth, was then in the twenty ninth year of his age; tall, muscular, and active in his frame, capable of immense fatigue, and apparently formed for long life. His features were coarse and harsh, his nose immoderately long, like that of his father and brother, Charles the Third, and Charles the Fourth, Kings of Spain: but, nevertheless, though the component parts of his face might separately be esteemed ugly, the general expression of his countenance had in it something intelligent and even agreeable. There was an unpolished simplicity, or rather a rude nature, in his manner, attitudes, deportment and conversation, which pleased for a double reason; on account of its own intrinsic claim to be liked, and as being rarely found on a throne, where we naturally expect disguise, artifice, and habits of concealment. If he conversed little with strangers, he seemed at least, when he talked, always to say what he thought; and he betrayed no defect of natural understanding, though he was altogether destitute of that elegance and art, which frequently veil the want of information. He always reminded me of a rustic, such as Abdolonymus, elevated by fortune or accident to a crown: but it was an amiable, honest, sensible, well-intentioned rustic, not altogether unworthy of such an elevation.

The Queen of Naples, who was not quite twenty-seven years old at this time, seemed much better fitted to represent the majesty of the throne, and to do the ho-

nours of a court. Though neither possessing beauty of face, or loveliness of person, yet was she not absolutely deficient in either respect; and if her figure might be esteemed too large, still it wanted neither grace, dignity, nor even attractions. She is the only queen whom I ever saw weep in public, before a crowd of both sexes, assembled in her own palace on a gala day. The festival on which I was presented to her, happened to be the anniversary of the loss of her eldest son, who expired exactly a year before, in 1778. He was a very fine boy of promising expectations, to whom his mother was passionately attached. The ignorance of the Neapolitan physicians, as it was believed, had caused his death: for, being seized with violent sickness and pain in his stomach, from which, an emetic, promptly administered, might probably have relieved him, they had the imprudence to bleed him, and thereby brought on fatal convulsions. Such was the queen's distress at the recollection of the event which had taken place on this painful anniversary, that she was unable to repress her emotions. In the presence chamber of the palace at Naples, she stood under a canopy, her right hand held out to the nobility and courtiers, as they approached to kiss it; holding in her left, a handkerchief with which she perpetually wiped her eyes, that were suffused in tears. It was difficult not to be favourably impressed towards a princess, capable of giving such an involuntary testimony of her maternal tenderness, in a place and situation, where it was impossible to suspect her of artifice or affectation.

Having drawn this imperfect outline of the King and Queen of Naples, from my own personal observations, I shall enumerate some of the particulars respecting them, which I collected in the course of conversation from Sir William or Lady Hamilton. I mean his first wife, who was a most accomplished and superior woman.

"No European sovereign, without exception," said Sir William, "has been so ill educated as the King of Naples. He is not even master of any language except Italian, without making a painful effort; and his ordinary Italian is a Neapolitan dialect, such as the lowest of

his subjects, the *lazaroni*, speak in their intercourse with each other. It is true that he understands French, and converses in it when indispensable; but he rarely reads any French author, and still more rarely attempts to write in that language. All the correspondence that takes place between him and his father, the King of Spain, is carried on in the common Neapolitan jargon. They write very frequently and largely to each other; but seldom does this intercourse embrace political subjects; their letters, of which I have seen numbers, being filled with accounts of the quantity and variety of the game respectively killed by them, in which the great ambition of each prince is to exceed the other. Ferdinand, indeed, who scarcely ever reads, considers as the greatest of misfortunes, a rainy day, when the weather proves too bad for him to go out to the chace. On such occasions, recourse is had to every expedient by which time may be killed, in order to dissipate his majesty's ennui, even to the most puerile and childish pastimes. The king's education was systematically neglected; for Charles the Third, alarmed at the imbecility of his eldest son, Philip, Duke of Calabria, who on account of his recognized debility of understanding, was wholly set aside from the right of succession; strictly ordered, at his departure for Spain in 1759, that this, his third son, should not be compelled to apply to any severe studies, or be made to exert any close application of mind.

I have frequently seen the unfortunate Duke of Calabria, who has only been dead a few years, and who was by his birth, heir to the Spanish monarchy. He attained to manhood, and was treated with certain distinctions, having chamberlains placed about him in constant attendance, who watched him with unremitting attention; as otherwise he would have committed a thousand excesses. Care was particularly taken to keep him from having any connection with the other sex, for which he manifested the strongest propensity; but it became at last impossible to prevent him altogether from attempting to emancipate himself in this respect. He has many times eluded the vigilance of his keepers, and on seeing ladies pass through the

apartments of the palace, would attack them with the same impetuosity, as Pan or the Satyrs are described by Ovid, when pursuing the nymphs; and with the same intentions. More than one lady of the court has been critically rescued from his embraces. On particular days of the year, he was allowed to hold a sort of court or levee, when the foreign ministers repaired to his apartments, to pay their compliments to him; but his greatest amusement consisted in having his hand held up by his attendants, while gloves were put upon it, one larger than another, to the number of fifteen or sixteen. His death was justly considered as a fortunate event, under such circumstances of incurable imbecility.

Before the present king fully attained his seventeenth year, the Marquis Tanucci, then prime minister, by directions sent from the court of Madrid, provided him a wife. The Archduchess Josepha, one of the daughters of the Empress Maria Theresa, being selected for Queen of Naples; and being presented to young Ferdinand, as a princess equally amiable in her mind, as she was agreeable in her person; he expected her arrival with great pleasure, mingled even with some impatience. So much more severely was it natural that he should feel the melancholy intelligence, when it arrived from Vienna, that she was dead of the small-pox. In fact, he manifested as much concern at the event, as could perhaps be expected in a prince of his disposition, and at his time of life, for the death of a person whom he had never seen. But a circumstance which greatly augmented his chagrin on the occasion was, its being considered indispensable for him not to take his usual diversion of hunting or fishing, on the day that the account reached Naples. Ferdinand reluctantly submitted to such a painful and unusual renunciation; but having consented to it from a sense of decorum, he immediately set about endeavouring to amuse himself within doors, in the best manner that circumstances would admit; an attempt in which he was aided by the nobleman in waiting about his person. They began, therefore, with billiards, a game which his majesty likes, and at which he plays with skill. When they

had continued it for some time, leap-frog was tried, to which succeeded various other feats of agility or gambols. At length, one of the gentlemen, more ingenious than the others, proposed to celebrate the funeral of the deceased arch-duchess. The idea, far from shocking the king, appeared to him, and to the whole company, as most entertaining; and no reflections, either on the indecorum, or want of apparent humanity, in the proceeding, interposed to prevent its immediate realization. Having selected one of the chamberlains, as proper, from his youth and feminine appearance, to represent the princess, they habited him in a manner suited to the mournful occasion; laid him out on an open bier, according to the Neapolitan custom at interments; and in order to render the ceremony more appropriate, as well as more accurately correct, they marked his face and hands with chocolate drops, which were designed to imitate the pustules of the small-pox. All the apparatus being ready, the funeral procession began, and proceeded through the principal apartments of the palace at Portici, Ferdinand officiating as chief mourner. Having heard of the arch-duchess's decease, I had gone thither on that day, in order to make my condolence privately to his majesty on the misfortune; and entering at the time, I became an eye-witness of this extraordinary scene, which, in any other country of Europe, would be considered as incredible, and would not obtain belief.

"The Arch-Duchess Caroline being substituted in the place of her sister, and being soon afterwards conducted from Vienna to Naples, the king advanced in person, as far as the 'Portella,' where the Neapolitan and Papal territories divide, in order to receive his new bride. She was then not sixteen years old, and though she could not by any means be esteemed handsome, yet she possessed many charms. Ferdinand manifested on his part, neither ardour nor indifference for the queen. On the morning after his nuptials, which took place in the beginning of May, 1768, when the weather was very warm, he rose at an early hour, and went out as usual to the chace, leaving his young wife in bed. Those courtiers who

accompanied him, having inquired of his majesty how he liked her; '*Dormé com un amazzata,*' replied he, '*et suda com un Porco.*' Such an answer would be esteemed, any where except at Naples, most indecorous; but here we are familiarized to far greater violations of propriety and decency. Those acts and functions which are never mentioned in England, and which are there studiously concealed, even by the vulgar, here are openly performed. When the king has made a hearty meal, and feels an inclination to retire, he commonly communicates that intention to the noblemen around him in waiting, and selects the favoured individuals, whom, as a mark of predilection, he chooses shall attend him, '*Sono ben pransato,*' says he, laying his hand on his belly, '*Adesso bisogna un buona panchiata.*' The persons thus preferred, then accompany his majesty, stand respectfully round him, and amuse him by their conversation, during the performance."

However strong this fact may appear, and however repugnant to our ideas of decency; it has been for successive centuries, perfectly consonant to the manners of the Italians in general, and scarcely less so to those of the French. D'Aubigné, a grave writer, in the "Memoirs of his Own Life," does not hesitate to relate in the most circumstantial manner, the narrow escape which Henry the Fourth, his master, had of being knocked on the head, while engaged in this necessary function. Nay, D'Aubigné composed a "*Quatrain*" on the adventure; which he has transmitted to posterity. The story is so naturally related, and is so characteristic of the nation, that I can't resist giving it in the words of the author. Henry, who was then only King of Navarre, having effected his escape from Paris, in 1575, on which occasion D'Aubigné accompanied him; they passed the river Seine at Poissy, and soon afterwards stopped to refresh themselves in a village. Here, says D'Aubigné, the king "*étant allé faire ses affaires dans un tet à cochons, une Vieille, qui le surprit en cet état, lui auroit fendue la tête par derrière, d'un coup de serpe, sans moi qui parari le coup.*" It is clear from this circumstance, that D'Aubigné must have been

close to his royal master at the time. Then follows the ludicrous epitaph which he made for the occasion, on a supposition that the old woman had killed the king.

“Cy git un Roi, grand par merveille,
Qui mourut comme Dieu permet,
D'un coup de serpe d'un Vieille,
Ainsi qu'il chioit dans un tet.”

His predecessor, Henry the Third, it is well known, was stabbed in the belly, of which wound he died, in 1589, while sitting on the *chaise percée*, in which indecorous situation he did not scruple to give audience to Clement, the regicide monk, who assassinated him. Marshal Suwarrow, in our own time, received his aids du camp, and his general officers, precisely in a similar manner. Madame de Maintenon, as the Duke de St. Simon informs us, thought those moments so precious, that she commonly accompanied Louis the Fourteenth to the “garderobe.” So did Louvois, when minister of state. The Duke de Vendome, while commanding the armies of France in Spain and Italy, at the commencement of the last century, was accustomed to receive the greatest personages, on public business, in the same situation. We have Cardinal Alberoni's authority for this fact. If we read the account written by Du Bois, of the last illness of Louis the Thirteenth, we may there see what humiliating functions Anne of Austria performed for that prince, in the course of his malady; over which, an English writer, more fastidious, would have drawn a veil. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, and the Palatine Duchess of Orleans, though women of the highest birth and rank, as well as of unimpeached conduct, conceal nothing on these points in their writings. The former, speaking of the Duchess of Orleans, her step-mother, second wife of Gaston, brother of Louis the Thirteenth, says, “She had contracted a singular habit of always running into another room, *pour se placer sur la chaise percée*, when dinner was announced. As she never failed in this particular, the grand maitre, or lord steward of Gaston's household, who performed the ceremony of summoning their royal highnesses to table; observed, smelling to his baton of office, that there

must certainly be either senna or rhubarb in its composition, as it invariably produced the effect of sending the duchess to the garderobe.” I have, myself, seen the late Electress Dowager of Saxony, daughter of the Emperor Charles the Seventh, at her own palace, in the suburbs of Dresden, rise from the table where she was playing, when the room has been full of company of both sexes; lay down her cards, retire for a few minutes, during which time the game was suspended, and then return, observing to those near her, “*J'ai pris médecine aujourd'hui*.” These circumstances sufficiently prove that Ferdinand, however gross his manners or language seem to us, by no means shocked the feelings, or excited the disgust of his own courtiers.

“In all the exercises or exertions of body, that demand vigour and address,” continued Sir William, “the King of Naples excels. He might have contended for the prize at the public games of ancient Greece, at Elis, or at Olympia, with no ordinary prospect of success. He likes, in particular, wrestling; and having heard that a young Irish gentleman of the name of Bourke, who visited Naples not long since, was an expert wrestler, he caused it to be signified, that he should like to try a fall with that foreigner: but Bourke had the good sense to decline a contest for the honours of the Palæstra, with a crowned head. He dances violently at the court balls; on one of which occasions, some years ago, I witnessed a scene truly original, as well as comic. When his brother-in-law, the Emperor Joseph, being on his progress through Italy, arrived here, a superb ball was given in honour of his visit; at which entertainment, however, he declined mixing personally in the dance. While his imperial majesty was standing near the dancers, engaged in conversation with me; Ferdinand having gone down the set, and being in a most profuse state of perspiration, pulled open his waistcoat: then taking Joseph's hand, he applied it suddenly to his own shirt behind, exclaiming at the same time, ‘*Sentité qui, Fratello mio*.’ The emperor instantly withdrew his hand, not without manifesting great discomposure; and the two sovereigns remained for a few seconds

looking in each other's faces. Surprise was equally painted in the features of both; for, as the one had never before been invited to try such an experiment, so the other had never found any individual who did not esteem himself honoured by the familiarity. I had no little difficulty to restrain the muscles of my countenance on the occasion."

"Joseph, who held his brother-in-law's understanding in great contempt, endeavoured to assume over him the sort of superiority, arrogated by a strong, over a weak mind. But Ferdinand, though confessedly his inferior, in cultivation and refinement, was by no means disposed to adopt his political opinions or ideas. He even manifested in various conversations, and on many occasions, that, defective as his education had been, he possessed as much plain sense, and even acute discernment, as the emperor, his brother Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Joseph did not indeed inspire any very high admiration, by his deportment or general conduct, while he remained at Naples. He was irritable, and even irascible, where he should have shown good humour, or command of temper. I accompanied him to the summit of Vesuvius, and with concern saw him break his cane over the shoulders of the guide, Bartolomeo, for some slight offence which he had given his imperial majesty.

"Ferdinand's passions are all swallowed up in his rage for the pleasures of the field; hunting, shooting, and fishing: for, this last diversion, peculiarly adapted to the climate of Naples, must be included in the number. He thinks no fatigue, and no privations, too great to undergo for its indulgence. The quantity of game, by which I principally mean deer, wild boar, of all ages, and stags of every kind, preserved in the royal woods or parks, at Astruni, at Caserta, Caccia Bella, and other places, exceeds belief. And the slaughter made of them in some of the hunting parties, is equally beyond credibility. I have frequently seen a heap, composed only of the offal or bowels, reaching as high as my head, and many feet in circumference. The king rarely misses a shot; but when he is tired with killing, then commences another operation. He next

dissects the principal pieces of game, which he presents to favoured courtiers, or distributes among his attendants. In order to perform this part of the diversion, having first stripped, he puts on a flannel dress, takes the knife in hand, and, with inconceivable dexterity, cuts up the animal. No carcass-butcher in Smithfield, can exceed him in anatomical ability; but he is frequently besmeared with blood from head to foot, before he has finished, and exhibits an extraordinary spectacle, not easily to be imagined by those who have never witnessed it. The queen herself is sometimes obliged to be present at the scene, though more, as may be supposed, in compliance with the king's wish, than from her own inclination. He is equally indefatigable on the water, in harpooning or in catching fish; particularly the *pesce spada*, or sword fish: and he neither regards heat, nor cold, nor hunger, nor danger. On these occasions, he is usually or always attended by a number of chosen Liparots, natives of the Lipari islands, who have been in all ages most expert sailors, divers, and fishermen.

"It is thus that Ferdinand passes the greatest portion of his time; while the potentates of Germany, England, France and Spain, are engaged in war. Not that he is indifferent to the felicity of his subjects, or regardless of the security and prosperity of his dominions. On the contrary, his heart, which is animated with the best emotions towards his people, impels him to manifest it by all his measures: but his defects of education, render him shy, embarrassed, and awkward; nor have his ministers any wish to awaken, or to invigorate the faculties of his mind. Neither Tanucci, who governed Naples during his minority, nor Sambuca, the present first minister, desire to see him assume an active part in the administration of public affairs. The Chevalier Acton, who is at the head of the marine, has however begun to put the Neapolitan navy in a more respectable condition, than it has been for several centuries. Already it affords some protection to the coasts of Calabria and of Sicily; which have been perpetually infested by the Algerines, Tunisians, and other pirates; who were accustomed to land, and to carry off

whole villages into slavery, precisely as Dragut and Barbarossa did two hundred years ago. Such calamities are even now by no means unusual. It is a fact, that I narrowly escaped, myself, some time since, in one of my maritime excursions round the southern provinces of the kingdom, being surprised in a Sparonara, while lying close under Cape Spartivento. Lady Hamilton was of that party, and those barbarians would not have respected my official character; nor still less would they have regarded the reclamations of this government.

“The power of the Neapolitan kings is moreover fettered by many impediments, which even a prince of the greatest talents, or of the most vigorous character, would find difficult to surmount. In Apulia, as well as in Calabria and Sicily, the great feudal barons still retain privileges that render them almost independent of the crown; and which they consider as imprescriptible, having constituted their birth-right for ages, under the various dynasties that have reigned over this beautiful country. The church enjoys revenues and immunities, not less incompatible in many respects with civil order and obedience. But Ferdinand is greatly beloved by his people, who know, and who do justice, to his good intentions. He is even far more popular than the queen. That princess, who possesses an active mind, and very considerable parts, as well as ambition and love of power, has assumed a share in the administration, for which she is by no means unqualified: yet is she less esteemed than her husband; who, if he is not ardently attached to her as a wife, treats her at least with great consideration, kindness, and confidence. They live together in conjugal union, though her majesty is not exempt from the frailties and weaknesses of her sex. Indeed, the air, manners, and society of this capital, are all very inimical to female virtue. From the time of the first Jane, Queen of Naples, so famous in the annals of gallantry, down to the present day, these countries have exhibited scenes of dissolute pleasure, or rather, of unrestrained licentiousness. They will probably ever so remain. “Yet,” concluded Sir William, “if I were compelled to be a king, I would choose Naples for my

kingdom. Here a crown has fewer thorns than in any other country. His very want of political power ensures his repose; and the storms which desolate Europe, pass over his head without injury. Placed at the extremity of Italy, he is removed out of the way of contest and hostility. A delicious climate, shores to which the Romans retired when masters of the world, in order to enjoy a luxury unattainable elsewhere, and which are still covered with the remains of Roman splendour, or Grecian magnificence; all the productions of the Levant which are to be found here, blended with those of the Mediterranean; a splendid capital, palaces, woods, game, every thing seems assembled in this enchanting bay, that can conduce to human enjoyment. Such is the favoured position, and the enviable lot of Ferdinand the Fourth.” Such, indeed, as here described, it might be considered without exaggeration, in 1779; though during the awful convulsions which have shaken Europe since that period, produced by the French revolution, his throne was subverted, and himself compelled to take refuge at Palermo during many years.

The impunity with which the great nobility perpetrated the most atrocious crimes, and the facility that they found in evading inquiry, or in eluding justice, then constituted one of the worst features of the Neapolitan administration. Lady Hamilton, who had been several years resident at Naples, where she died not long afterwards, related to me various instances illustrative of this fact. “Some time ago,” said she, “a Sicilian lady of high rank, was, by order of the court, brought prisoner here from that Island. She had committed so many assassinations or murders, that her own relations having denounced her, called on the government to arrest the further course of her crimes. It was believed that she had despatched ten or eleven persons by the dagger, or by poison; particularly by that species of poison, denominated, ‘*aqua tophana*.’ I had the curiosity to visit her during her confinement. She received me sitting in her bed, conversed with great cheerfulness, offered me chocolate, as well as other refreshments, and seemed to labour under no agitation of mind. In her person she was deli-

cate, feminine, and agreeable, her manners polite and gentle. Her age did not exceed three or four and twenty. From her deportment, one could not have suspected her to be capable of such atrocities. Though her guilt was unquestionable, she was not put to death. Confinement for life, in a convent of a severe order, together with certain acts of religious mortification or penance, which they are compelled to undergo;—these constitute the punishments usually inflicted here on culprits of high birth.”

The vicinity of the Northern Provinces of the kingdom of Naples to the papal territories, and the ease with which malefactors of both countries, respectively gained an asylum, by passing the frontiers, opened another door to the commission of the most flagitious acts. Conversing at Portici, on this subject, with Lady Hamilton, she related to me the following story, which I shall endeavour to give in her own words. “About the year 1743, a person of the name of Ogilvie, an Irishman by birth, who practised surgery with great reputation at Rome, and who resided not far from the ‘Piazza di Spagni,’ in that city; being in bed, was called up to attend some strangers who demanded his professional assistance. They stopped before his house in a coach; and on his going to the door he found two men masked, by whom he was desired to accompany them immediately, as the case which brought them, admitted of no delay, and not to omit taking with him his lancets. He complied, and got into the coach; but no sooner had they quitted the street in which he resided, than they informed him that he must submit to have his eyes bandaged; the person to whom they were about to conduct him, being a lady of rank, whose name and place of abode it was indispensable to conceal. To this requisition he likewise submitted; and after driving through a number of streets, apparently with a view to prevent his forming any accurate idea of the part of the city to which he was conducted, the carriage at length stopped. The two gentlemen, his companions, then alighting, and each taking him by the arm, conducted him into a house. Ascending a narrow staircase, they entered an apartment, where he was released from the

bandage tied over his eyes. One of them next acquainted him, that it being necessary to deprive of life a lady who had dishonoured her family, they had chosen him to perform the office, knowing his professional skill; that he would find her in the adjoining chamber, prepared to submit to her fate; and that he must open her veins with as much expedition as possible; a service, for the execution of which, he should receive a liberal recompense.

“Ogilvie at first peremptorily refused to commit an act, so highly repugnant to his feelings. But the two strangers assured him, with solemn denunciations of vengeance, that his refusal could only prove fatal to himself, without affording the slightest assistance to the object of his compassion; that her doom was irrevocable, and that unless he chose to participate a similar fate, he must submit to execute the office imposed on him. Thus situated, and finding all entreaty or remonstrance vain, he entered the room, where he found a lady of a most interesting figure and appearance, apparently in the bloom of youth. She was habited in a loose undress; and immediately afterwards, a female attendant placed before her a large tub filled with warm water, in which she immersed her legs. Far from opposing any impediment to the act which she knew he was sent to perform, the lady assured him of her perfect resignation; entreating him to put the sentence passed on her into execution with as little delay as possible. She added, that she was well aware, no pardon could be hoped for from those who had devoted her to death, which alone could expiate her trespass: felicitating herself that his humanity would abbreviate her sufferings, and soon terminate their duration.

“After a short conflict with his own mind, perceiving no means of extrication or of escape, either for the lady, or for himself; being moreover urged to expedite his work, by the two persons without, who, impatient at his reluctance, threatened to exercise violence on him, if he procrastinated; Ogilvie took out his lancet, opened her veins, and bled her to death in a short time. The gentlemen having carefully examined the body, in order to ascertain that she was no more;

after expressing their satisfaction, offered him a purse of *Zechins*, as a remuneration; but he declined all recompense, only requesting to be conveyed from a scene, on which he could not reflect without horror. With this entreaty they complied, and having again applied a bandage to his eyes, they led him down the same staircase, to the carriage. But it being narrow, in descending the steps, he contrived to leave on one, or both of the walls, unperceived by his conductors, the marks of his fingers, which were stained with blood. After observing precautions similar to those used in bringing him thither from his own house, he was conducted home; and at parting, the two masques charged him, if he valued his life, never to divulge, and if possible, never to think on the past transaction. They added, that if he should embrace any measures with a view to render it public, or to set on foot an inquiry into it, he should be infallibly immolated to their revenge. Having finally dismissed him at his own door, they drove off, leaving him to his reflections.

“On the subsequent morning, after great irresolution, he determined at whatever risk to his personal safety, not to participate, by concealing so enormous a crime. It formed, nevertheless, a delicate and difficult undertaking to substantiate the charge, as he remained altogether ignorant of the place to which he had been carried, or of the name and quality of the lady whom he had deprived of life. Without suffering himself, however, to be deterred by these considerations, he waited on the secretary of the apostolic chamber, and acquainted him with every particular; adding, that if the government would extend to him protection, he did not despair of finding the house, and of bringing to light the perpetrators of the deed. Benedict the Fourteenth (*Lambertini*), who then occupied the papal chair, had no sooner received the information, than he immediately commenced the most active measures for discovering the offenders. A guard of the *sbirri*, or officers of justice, was appointed by his order, to accompany Ogilvie; who judging from various circumstances, that he had been conveyed out of the city of Rome, began by visiting the villas scattered without the walls of

that metropolis. His search proved ultimately successful. In the villa Papa Julio, constructed by Pope Julius the Third (*del Monté*), he there found the bloody marks left on the wall by his fingers, at the same time that he recognized the apartment in which he had put to death the lady. The palace belonged to the Duke de Bracciano, the chief of which illustrious family, and his brother, had committed the murder in the person of their own sister. They no sooner found that it was discovered, than they fled to this city, where they easily eluded the pursuit of justice. After remaining here for some time, they obtained a pardon, by the exertions of their powerful friends, on payment of a considerable fine to the apostolic chamber, and under the further condition of affixing over the chimney-piece of the room where the crime had been perpetrated, a plate of copper, commemorating the transaction, and their penitence. This plate, together with the inscription, still continued to exist there till within these few years.”

However extraordinary many circumstances of this story may appear, similar events or accounts have been circulated and believed in other countries of Europe. I have often been assured, both at Vienna, and in various places of the German empire, that an occurrence not less romantic and more enigmatical in its nature, took place in 1774 or 1775; for some uncertainty prevailed as to the precise time when the fact was pretended to have happened. It is well known that the “Bourreau,” or public executioner of the city of Strasburgh, although that place formed a part of the French monarchy ever since the reign of Louis the Fourteenth; yet was frequently employed during a great part of the last century, to execute the functions of his office, on the other side of the Rhine, in Swabia, on the territories of Baden, and in the Brisgaw; all which countries constitute a portion of Germany. Some persons who arrived at Strasburgh about the period to which I have alluded; having repaired, as it is said, to the house of the executioner, during the night, demanded that he should instantly accompany them out of the town, in order to execute a criminal of condition; for which service he should, of course, receive a liberal re-

muneration. They particularly enjoined him to bring the heavy two-edged sword with which he was accustomed, in the discharge of his ordinary functions, to behead malefactors. Being placed in a carriage with his conductors, he passed the bridge over the river to Kehl, the first town on the eastern bank of the Rhine; where they acquainted him that he had a considerable journey to perform; the object of which must be carefully concealed, as the person intended to be put to death, was an individual of great distinction. They added that he must not oppose their taking the proper precautions to prevent his knowing the place to which he was conveyed. He acquiesced, and allowed them to hoodwink him. On the second day they arrived at a moated castle, the drawbridge of which being lowered for the purpose, they drove into the court. After waiting a considerable time, he was then conducted into a spacious hall, where stood a scaffold hung with black cloth, and in the centre was placed a stool or chair. A female shortly made her appearance, habited in deep mourning, her face wholly concealed by a veil. She was led by two persons, who, when she was seated, having first tied her hands, next fastened her legs with cords. As far as he could form any judgment from her general figure, he considered her to have passed the period of youth. Not a word was uttered; neither did she make any complaints, nor attempt any resistance. When all the preparations for her execution were completed, on a signal given he unsheathed the instrument of punishment, according to the practice adopted in the German empire, where the axe is rarely, or never, used for decapitation; and her head being forcibly held up by the hair, he severed it at a single stroke from her body. Without allowing him to remain more than a few minutes, he was then handsomely rewarded, conducted back to Kehl by the same persons who had brought him to the place, and set down at the end of the bridge leading to Strasbourg.

I have heard the question frequently agitated during my residence in Germany, and many different opinions stated, relative to the name and quality of the lady thus asserted to have been put to death.

The most generally adopted belief rested on the Princess of Tour and Taxis, Augusta Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Alexander, Prince of Wirtemberg. She had been married at a very early period of life, to Charles Anselm, Prince of Tour and Taxis. Whether it proceeded from mutual incompatibility of character, or, as was commonly pretended, from the princess's intractable and ferocious disposition, the marriage proved eminently unfortunate in its results. She was accused of having repeatedly attempted to take away her husband's life, particularly while they were walking together near the castle of Donau-Stauff, on the high bank overhanging the Danube, when, it was said, she endeavoured to precipitate him into the river. It is certain, that about the year 1773 or 1774, a final separation took place between them, at the prince's solicitation. The reigning Duke of Wirtemberg, her brother, to whose custody she was consigned, caused her to be closely immured in a castle within her own dominions, where she was strictly guarded, no access being allowed to her. Of the last mentioned fact, there is little doubt; but it may be considered as much more problematical, whether she was the person put to death by the executioner of Strasbourg. I have dined, in the autumn of the year 1778, with the Prince of Tour and Taxis, at his castle or seat of Donau-Stauff, near the northern bank of the Danube, a few miles from the city of Ratisbon. He was then about forty-five years of age, and his wife was understood to be in confinement. I believe that her decease was not formally announced as having taken place, till many years subsequent to 1778: but this circumstance by no means militates against the possibility of her having suffered by a more summary process, if her conduct had exposed her to merit it; and if it was thought proper to inflict upon her capital punishment. The private annals of the great houses and sovereigns of the German empire, if they were divulged, would furnish numerous instances of similar severity exercised in their own families, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some of these stories might realize the tragical adventures commemorated by Boccace, or rel

Margaret, Queen of Navarre, sister of Francis the First, in her "Tales;" which last mentioned productions, however romantic some of them may appear, are not fictions but faithful delineations of the gallantries, or crimes that took place in the court of Pau, where she resided, near the front of the Pyrenees. Count Konigsmarek fell a victim at Hanover, to the resentment of Ernest Augustus, father of King George the First: and we know how narrowly the great Frederic, afterwards King of Prussia, escaped perishing by the same weapon which beheaded his companion Katt, arbitrarily sacrificed by Frederic William the first, for only endeavouring to facilitate the prince's evasion from his father's court.

While I am engaged on the subject of extraordinary events, I shall record one more fact, which may appear equally curious with either of the stories that I have just recounted. During the first winter that I passed at Vienna, in 1778, I became acquainted with the Count and Countess Podotski. She was one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of high rank whom I have seen on the continent. Her husband, a great Polish nobleman, hereditary cup-bearer, or "grand echanson" of the crown, had become in some measure an Austrian subject, in consequence of the first partition of Poland, which took place in 1772. His patrimonial estates lying principally in that southern portion of the kingdom which fell to the share of Maria Theresa, he of course repaired frequently to Vienna; between which capital and Warsaw he divided his time. During the winter of 1776, as the Count and Countess Podotski were on their way from Vienna to Cracow, the wolves which abound in the Carpathian mountains, rendered more than ordinarily bold and ferocious, in consequence of the severity of the season; descending in great numbers, began to follow the carriage between the two little towns of Oswiezk and Zator; the latter of which places is only a few leagues distant from Cracow. Of two servants who attended him, one had been sent forward to Zator, for the purpose of procuring post horses. The other, a *Heyduc*, to whom he was much attached on account of his fidelity, finding the wolves rapidly gaining ground

on them, rode up, and exhorted the Count to permit him to abandon to these animals his horse; as such a prey would naturally arrest their impetuosity, and allow time for the count and countess to reach Zator. Podotski immediately agreed to the proposal; and the *Heyduc*, mounting behind the carriage, left his horse, who was soon overtaken, and torn in a thousand pieces.

They continued their journey meanwhile with all possible speed, in the hope of getting to the town, from which they were at an inconsiderable distance. But their horses were fatigued; and the wolves, become more ravenous, as well as eager, by having tasted blood, already were nearly up with them. In this extremity, the *Heyduc* said to his master, "There is only one way left to save us. We shall all be devoured in a few minutes. I am ready to sacrifice myself, by going to meet the wolves, if you will swear to be a father to my wife and children. I shall be destroyed; but while they are occupied in falling upon me, you may escape." Podotski, after a moment's reluctance to accept such an offer, pressed nevertheless by the prospect of imminent destruction to them all, and seeing no prospect of any other means of extrication, consented; and assured him, that if he were capable of devoting himself for their common preservation, his family should find in him a constant protector. The *Heyduc* instantly descending, advanced to meet the wolves, who surrounded and soon despatched him. But his magnanimous sacrifice of himself, by checking the ardour of their pursuit, allowed Count Podotski time to reach the gates of Zator in safety. I ought not to omit that the *Heyduc* was a dissident or protestant, while his master professed the catholic religion; a circumstance which greatly added to the merit and effect of the sacrifice. I believe that Count Podotski most religiously fulfilled his engagement, to befriend the family of his faithful servant. For the honour of human nature, we ought not to suppose it possible that he could fail on such a point. I cannot say that I have heard him relate this story himself; but I have received it from those persons who knew its authenticity, and who recounted it to

me at Vienna, while the count was engaged in the same room at play, in the hotel of the French ambassador, the Baron de Breteuil, only about two years after it took place. An instance of more prompt, cool, and generous self-devotion, is perhaps not to be found in the history of mankind; nor ought its value to be in any degree diminished by the consideration, that even if the *Heyduc* had not acted as he did, they must all probably have perished together.

If Naples, in 1779, offered a number of enchanting objects to the imagination and the senses; Florence, where I likewise passed a considerable time in the same year, presented others not less captivating to the mind. The "Palazzo Vecchio," once inhabited by the elder Cosmo, and by Lorenzo de' Medicis: names which will be for ever venerated;—the chapel of St. Lorenzo, where reposed the remains of so many princes or individuals of that illustrious family, whose monuments were adorned by the hand of Michael Angelo;—the gallery constructed for the reception of all those master-pieces of ancient and of modern genius, which taste and expense had collected in the lapse of ages;—even the surrounding scenery, the river Arno, Fiesolè, Vallombrosa, and every object, awakened classic, or poetic recollections. Sir Horace Mann, who was then the British minister at the court of Tuscany, had long outlived the extinction of the House of Medicis; for which race of princes he seemed to preserve the same predilection, which Brantome always manifests for the family of Valois, above the line of Bourbon. He remembered, and personally knew, the last grand duke of the Medicean line, John Gaston, who died in 1737; in consequence of whose decease without issue, those beautiful portions of Italy, constituting his dominions, were finally transferred to a prince of Lorrain.

Conversing with Sir Horace Mann, on this topic, which always excited his regret; "John Gaston," observed he to me, "was one of the most superior and accomplished men, whom the present century has witnessed, if his immoderate pursuit of pleasures had not enervated his mind, and debilitated his frame. He became, long before his death, incapable

of continuing his family; but that inability did not produce its extinction. A sort of fatality seemed to overhang the house of Medicis, and to render ineffectual all the measures adopted for its prolongation. When the fact became perfectly ascertained, that John Gaston could not perpetuate his line, the Cardinal Hippolito de Medicis, his uncle, was selected for that purpose; a dispensation from his ecclesiastical vows being previously obtained from the papal see. The only, and the indispensable object of the marriage; being the attainment of heirs male to the grand duchy, in order to prevent its seizure by foreign violence, or its incorporation with the Austrian, French, or Spanish monarchies; all Italy was searched, with the view of finding a young and handsome princess, from whom might be expected a numerous family. A princess of Mirandola, on whom the selection fell, seemed to unite every requisite qualification. The nuptials were solemnized; and the bridegroom being of a feeble constitution, as well as advanced in life, it was plainly insinuated to the lady, that for reasons of state necessity, connected with the very political existence of Tuscany under the reigning house, she must produce an heir. The most agreeable youths and pages about the court were purposely thrown in her way, and every facility was furnished, that might conduce to the accomplishment of the object. But, so sacredly did she observe the marriage vow, that no seductions could make an impression on her, and she remained without issue. Her husband died, and was followed by John Gaston. France having acquired Lorrain, and Dón Carlos being made sovereign of Naples, Tuscany was delivered over by the great continental powers, as a conquered or forfeited country, to Francis, Duke of Lorrain. But, no sooner had these events taken place, than Hippolito's widow, who had surmounted every temptation to inconstancy during his life, gave the reins to her inclinations, and brought into the world two or three children, within a few years. It was thus that Florence, the repository of so many invaluable monuments of Greek and Roman sculpture, collected during successive centuries, by the princes of Medicis,

together with the territories dependant on it, passed into the Austrian family." Sir Horace little foresaw at that time, the new and more calamitous revolutions impending over Tuscany, about to issue from the volcano of the French revolution.

That beautiful country, the cradle of the fine arts, in 1779, under the mild and parental government of the Grand Duke Leopold, enjoyed a great degree of felicity, as well as prosperity; perhaps as much, or more, than at any period of its history; either when a commonwealth, or under the administration of the house of Medicis. While his father, the Emperor Francis, retained the sovereignty of Tuscany, that portion of Italy was considered only as a detached province of the Austrian monarchy, rarely visited; and the internal control of which, Francis committed to Germans, or to subjects of Lorraine. But, with the accession of Leopold, as grand duke, Florence assumed a new aspect; and though he occasionally repaired to Vienna, in order to pay his duty to the Empress Maria Theresa his mother, yet he was not partial to the climate or manners of Austria. He loved the banks of the Arno, far more than those of the Danube; dividing his time between the occupations of civil government, the education of his numerous family, which he superintended in person with great care; and the researches of natural philosophy, particularly chemistry; for which last mentioned pursuit, like the Emperor Francis, he nourished a strong predilection. In imitation of other royal philosophers, ancient and modern, with the single illustrious exceptions, I believe, of the great Frederic, King of Prussia, and of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden; he sought in the gratifications of female society, the best relief from the toils and cares of state. An English lady, the Countess Cowper, became at this time distinguished by his attachment; and the exertion of his interest with Joseph the Second his brother, procured her husband, Earl Cowper, to be created soon afterwards a prince of the German empire: an honour which, I believe, had not been conferred on any British subject, since the beginning of the last century, when John Churchill, the great Duke of Marlbo-

rough, was raised to the dignity of Prince of Mildenheim, by the Emperor Joseph the First, after the memorable victory of Blenheim.

While I am engaged on the subject of the two brothers, Joseph and Leopold, who were successively Emperors of Germany, as well as Kings of Hungary and Bohemia, I shall make a few observations relative to both these princes. The reign of Joseph, comprising more than nine years, from November, 1780, to February, 1790, may be considered as one of the most unfortunate and injurious in its effects to the House of Austria, which occurs in the annals of that family. He possessed nevertheless many eminent virtues; activity, frugality, enlargement of mind, facility of access, indefatigable application, great renunciation of pleasure, the desire of acquiring knowledge, and of ameliorating the condition of his people. But he was theoretical, of an irritable temper, precipitate, ambitious, despotic; and led astray by his anxiety to appear, like his contemporary, Frederic the Second, King of Prussia, his own general and minister. That great prince last named, became, himself, on more than one occasion, during the "Seven Years War," as is well known, the victim of his temerity or pertinacity in rejecting the advice of his commanders. Joseph attempted, with far inferior talents, to conduct the military operations; but disaster perpetually attended him in the field. Laudohn was reduced to the necessity of forcing him to quit the camp in Lower Hungary, during the war carried on against the Turks; and his arms never penetrated beyond the Danube, into Servia, till he left the army, and retired to Vienna. His alliance with Catherine the Second, and his visits to the Crimea in her company, of which romantic journeys the Prince de Ligne has given us such amusing details; produced no permanent advantages to his crown, or real benefit to his people. We know that he had actually made with the Russian empress, a partition of all the European portion of the Turkish dominions, and of some of the Asiatic provinces lying along the shore of the Black Sea: but the two sovereigns found it easier to divide Poland, than to dismember Turkey. Joseph's imprudent, arbi-

trary, and impolitic infractions of the privileges, or constitutional rights of his Flemish subjects, when aggravated by his suppression of many of the monastic establishments; produced either an insurrection, or a dangerous fermentation among the Hungarians, and throughout the Austrian Netherlands. While he fondly anticipated the conquest of the Ottoman provinces beyond Belgrade, which Prince Eugene had subjected to Charles the Sixth, seventy years earlier; the Hungarians opened a secret negotiation of the most dangerous nature, with the court of Berlin; and the Flemings overturned the imperial government at Brussels. Even the archduchy of Austria, and the kingdom of Bohemia, manifested symptoms of disaffection: while the French revolution, which had commenced in the summer of 1789, advancing with gigantic steps towards democracy, anarchy, and external violence, painfully attracted his attention on that vulnerable quarter, which he had imprudently dismantled and laid open to invasion. Such was the critical and convulsed state of the Austrian monarchy, when Joseph expired at Vienna, in the spring of 1790, at the age of forty-nine; leaving no issue by either of his wives; but, extenuated by diseases, caused or accelerated in their progress, by his own irritability of temper, agitation of mind, and the augmenting embarrassments of his affairs.

Leopold, who succeeded him, and who was unquestionably a prince of deep reflection, enlarged capacity, and sound judgment; perceived the misfortunes which had flowed from the spirit of innovation, reform, and restless activity or ambition, that had characterized his brother. But, it was not easy for him to withdraw from the political connexions formed by Joseph with the Empress Catherine the Second. Yet, alarmed at the state of Flanders and of Hungary, while he dreaded the issue of the revolutionary struggle in which his brother-in-law, Louis the Sixteenth, was involved with his subjects; Leopold, after many doubts and much hesitation, finally determined to quit the alliance of Russia. A circumstance which took place not long after his accession, confirmed him in the resolution. Potemkin, who then go-

verned his imperial mistress and the court of Petersburg; commanding the armies of that power in the vicinity of Oczakow, on the coast of the Black Sea, pushed his conquests against the Turks, so far to the westward, in Moldavia and Walachia, as to approach the Austrian frontier, on the Lower Danube, in Servia. Uneasy at the advances of such a neighbour, the emperor addressed a letter to him, couched in very obliging language; but, intimating his imperial majesty's wishes that he would desist from prosecuting his advantages any further on that side. Potemkin, intoxicated with favour, brutal in his manners, insolent, and restrained by no considerations of policy, or of respect for the dignity of the writer, had the audacity to throw the letter on the ground, in the presence of various persons, to spit upon it, and to trample it under foot; adding the most injurious or insulting epithets relative personally to Leopold. These barbarous and impolitic ebullitions of his rage, were reported soon afterwards to the emperor, by Foscari, the Venetian ambassador at the court of Petersburg; who, having returned to Venice, and there meeting his imperial majesty, acquainted him with the facts. Leopold heard the narration with great apparent calmness, but such an insult did not make the less deep impression on his mind. We may, however, assume with probability, that before Potemkin would have ventured on so outrageous an act of contempt toward his sovereign's ally, he had good reason to believe that the existing ties between the two courts or sovereigns, were about to be dissolved, and new alliances to be formed by Austria.

In fact, Leopold, from an early period of his reign, turned all his views towards the two courts of Berlin and London. After concluding a treaty at Reichenbach, with the King of Prussia, he made peace with the Turks at Sistova; wisely renouncing all his brother Joseph's conquests in Bosnia and Servia, restoring Belgrade to the Porte, and abandoning his connexions with Catherine. Impelled by an anxious desire of arresting the course of those French revolutionary principles, which, he foresaw, would, if not checked, eventually involve Europe in the greatest calamities, he set on foot

the celebrated *interview of Pilnitz*. In the summer of 1791, having repaired with his eldest son, the present emperor Francis, to the castle or hunting seat of that name, belonging to the Elector of Saxony, situate near Dresden; Frederic William, accompanied in like manner by his future successor, the reigning King of Prussia, there met Leopold. Their conferences led to a treaty, which adopted, as its fundamental basis, the resolution "not to make war on *France*, but to arm against the introduction of *French revolutionary principles* into Germany and the Low Countries." The emperor, who had formed an opinion to which he systematically adhered, that the republican faction in Paris would only be aided by aggression and hostility, thought that war must therefore be avoided: but, he conceived that the great powers of Europe should arm against *French principles*, by forming a military cordon round France; thus shutting in, if I may so express myself, the moral or political infection, and leaving them to exhaust their democratic rage on each other.

Such was the unquestionable object and scope of that memorable *treaty of Pilnitz*, relative to which so much has been said or written within the last twenty years, and whose very existence has been called in question. How far the plan might have proved efficacious, if it had been generally acted upon by all the Germanic body, as early as 1791; and if Leopold, who framed it, had lived to conduct its operations; it is difficult to venture a decided opinion: but, for the authenticity of the fact itself, I think I may challenge contradiction. Perhaps, moral and political principles are not to be shut in or compressed by any defensive precautions which can be adopted by human wisdom. I am fully convinced at least, that when Mr. Pitt, early in 1793, declared open hostility on France, he could not have saved England by temporizing measures. Nay, I thought at the time, and I continue so to think now, after the lapse of more than twenty years, that Mr. Fox would have formed the same estimate, and would have acted precisely in the same manner, if he had been seated in Mr. Pitt's place, as first minister, on the treasury bench. The whole difference in their mode of seeing

and appreciating the tendency of the French revolution, lay in the possession, or the negation, of political power. Indeed, the fact was practically proved, when Fox, after Pitt's decease in 1806, arrived at employment. It soon became evident how much his attainment of a seat in the cabinet, had illuminated his understanding, as well as invigorated his measures, in opposition to revolutionary principles and their consequences. Fox's masterly speech on the cession of the two Margraviates of Anspach and Bareith to Bavaria, by Frederic William King of Prussia, and his acceptance of Hanover from Bonaparte, as a compensation; sufficiently demonstrated that he then saw through the optics of Pitt and Burke. The present Earl of Chatham, if he had been seated under the gallery at the time, might have exclaimed with *Isabella* in "Measure for Measure," on hearing the secretary's harangue,

"There spake my brother. There my father's
grave
Did utter forth a voice!"——

I return to Leopold. So anxious was he to form a defensive league against the French republican contagion, that on the very day succeeding his coronation at Frankfort, as Emperor of Germany, in the autumn of 1790, he despatched a confidential agent, whom I well know, and who is still living, to the court of Berlin, empowered to open a private negotiation with Frederic William. It was confined personally to the two sovereigns; their respective first ministers, Kaunitz and Hertzberg, being excluded from any knowledge of the transaction. The King of Prussia, who came readily into Leopold's views, employed Bischoffswerder, his favourite, to carry back his assent. But no final or effectual measures, as they well knew, could be settled, without the participation of England. Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville entered ardently into the plan, which had principally in view two objects; to arrest the arms of Catherine on the shore of the Euxine, and to coerce the republicans of Paris, without making offensive war on France. The former of these points would unquestionably have been attained, if Mr. Fox had not excited so formidable an opposition in

the House of Commons, as compelled the ministry reluctantly to recede from their engagements. He at the same time sent Mr. Adair, as his own private agent, to Petersburg; an act, for which many persons thought that he deserved impeachment, far more than Hastings merited prosecution on account of his conduct while Governor-General of India. Leopold, apprehensive of Catherine's resentment, doubtful of Mr. Pitt's and Lord Grenville's sincerity, nor without alarm at the murmurs which he foresaw would arise among his own troops, on the evacuation of Belgrade, and the restitution of his conquests in Servia; said to a gentleman, a native of Great Britain, deep in his confidence, with whom he was accustomed to unbosom his thoughts, and who had formed the medium of his intercourse with Frederic William, "*J'ai signé la Paix avec les Turcs : mais, la Grande Bretagne, est-elle sincère ? Me tiendra-t-elle ses engagements ? Catherine sera inexorable. Je l'ai vu en Songe, Hier, la nuit, le Poignard à la Main.*" He even disapproved and lamented the line of conduct adopted by Pitt towards the empress, in the business of Oczakow, as severe, irritating, and calculated to render her implacable. "Why," observed Leopold, speaking to the same friend, "rob the empress of her laurels, and humiliate her in the eyes of Europe ? It is necessary that her head should be encircled with glory, in order to hide her feet, which are all stained with blood." In fact, Catherine, who never forgave either Austria, Prussia, or England, for their conduct towards her, propelled those powers to commence war on France in 1792; but, she extended no assistance to them in the contest. On the contrary, she compelled Frederic William to withdraw from the great alliance, and to return home, by attacking Poland. "If," said the king, addressing himself to the distinguished individual already alluded to, "I had not marched my army back into my own dominions, she would not only have taken Warsaw, but have entered Berlin likewise with her troops." It was Russia, therefore, which acted as one great cause of the overthrow of the first confederacy formed against republican France.

During the autumn of the year 1791, Leopold being on his way from Vienna to Florence, stopped, for the purpose of refreshment, at a small post house in the duchy of Styria; where, while he remained, a crowd of his own subjects, pressed round to look at him. Among them he remarked an old woman, who, when he got into his carriage, approached it; and knocking against the glass with her hand, addressed some words to him in a tone of great violence and asperity, accompanied with gestures indicative of resentment: but, as she spoke in the Styrian dialect, he was wholly unable to comprehend her meaning. Apprehending that she might have some complaint to prefer, or might have received some injury demanding redress, he ordered his attendants to question her on the subject of her application. They manifested considerable reluctance in explaining to him its nature; but on his insisting to be informed, one of them answered that she said, "Render justice promptly. We know all that the Poissardes have done at Paris." The emperor made no reply; but, when he recounted the story to the gentleman who related it to me, and to whom he was used to speak without reserve, he added, "You may suppose that I have read and reflected much upon the French revolution and its consequences: but, all that has been said, or can be written upon it, never carried such conviction to my mind, as the few words uttered by the old woman in Styria." They forcibly remind us of the female, who observed to Alexander the Great, that if he was not at leisure to hear abuses, and to redress grievances, why did he reign ?

Notwithstanding all the efforts made by the emigrants, for inducing Leopold to commence war with France, he remained inflexibly steady to his system of arming against the *revolution*, but of never attacking the *French nation*. It was not till after his decease, under Francis, his successor, in the summer of 1792, that the Austrians entered Champagne, in conjunction with the Prussian forces. Leopold's death took place on the first day of March, that very year, at Prague; to which city he had repaired for the purpose of being there crowned King of Bohemia. I think I may

venture to assert with confidence, that he was poisoned; and that the poison was administered in confectionery, which a lady presented him at a masquerade. Every endeavour was used to conceal the fact; and with that view, it was pretended that his end had been produced by some drugs or incentives, which he himself prepared in his own laboratory:—for, he passed much time in chemical researches and processes. But, Agusius, his physician, who opened his body, did not entertain any doubt that he fell a victim to poison.

During the spring of the year 1798, chancing to be alone with a foreign nobleman, in London, whose name I do not think proper to mention, he being still alive, but whose veracity was unquestionable; and who, as having been the ambassador of a crowned head, at the court of Vienna, when Leopold's death happened, must have possessed the best means of obtaining information; I ventured to interrogate him on the subject. "I was accustomed," answered he, "during the last year of the emperor's life, to see him frequently, and to have long audiences of him, on business in his closet. During these interviews, I beheld him when divested of any disguise; and I can pronounce, as a matter of certainty, that the force of his mind was then altogether broken, and his faculties enfeebled. His memory in particular had become so weakened, that he could no longer retain from one day to another, the facts or images committed to it. He rarely recollected the conversation of the preceding morning. This premature decay of his intellectual powers, resulted from his inordinate passion for the other sex, which had characterised him at every period of his life, and which he continued to indulge when it proved destructive to his frame. The brain was particularly affected. In my audiences of Leopold, he always walked up and down the apartment, during the whole time. On his table lay a number of rolls of wax, which he bit from one minute to another, spitting out the pieces on the floor. When he quitted the room, whether any other persons were present, or whether we were alone, he never advanced forward in a straight line; but he went round the sides of the chamber,

touching with his hand the wainscot, or the window shutters. No circumstance could more strongly indicate a disordered or enfeebled understanding. As to the nature of his death, I am unable positively to pronounce upon the fact. Certainly, his body, when opened, exhibited every mark of poison. But, if he was poisoned, by whom was it administered, or with what object? I cannot pretend to guess, or even to form a conjecture." Two opinions, as I have been assured, prevailed at Prague, respecting it; both of which were alike founded on Leopold's well known determination not to engage in a war with France. One party maintained that the Girondists, which faction then predominated at Paris, dreading the effects of his defensive system, as most injurious to their tenure of power, removed him in the manner related; while another party accused the emigrants of having produced his death, as the only means left them of regaining their estates, by forcing an immediate rupture between the Austrian and French governments. I must leave the fact problematical. Time, however, will probably elucidate its nature.

Among the objects of mingled curiosity and compassion, which Florence presented in 1779, to the view of an Englishman, was the Chevalier de St. George; or, as we commonly denominate him, the *Pretender*. It was impossible to contemplate him, without making many reflections on his own destiny, and on the condition of the infatuated family of which he was the representative. Neither ancient, nor modern history, presents the example of a line of princes so eminently unfortunate, during a succession of ages! The calamities which overwhelmed the house of Bourbon, awful as they must be esteemed, have been comprised within the space of five and twenty years: but, from James the First of *Scotland*, murdered in the most inhuman manner, at Perth, in 1437, down to the last of his descendants; with only the two exceptions of James the First of *England*, and Charles the Second; all the others perished by the hand of the executioner, or by violent and premature death, or died in exile, maintained by foreign contribution. It was not, however, merely when consi-

dered as the grandson of James the Second, and the inheritor of the pretensions of the Stuarts, that the Chevalier de St. George excited an interest in the mind of every reflecting spectator. By his mother, he descended from the celebrated John Sobieski, King of Poland, who was his maternal great grandfather; the first Chevalier de St. George having carried off from Inspruck, about the year 1719, and married Clementina Sobieska, daughter and heiress of Prince James Sobieski, whom Charles the Twelfth, King of Sweden, meditated, some years earlier, to have placed on the Polish throne. In right of that princess, her son succeeded to very considerable patrimonial estates situated in Poland; the produce of which, formed a much more solid source of support, than the precarious allowance or donations, made and withdrawn as circumstances impelled, by the French and Spanish crowns, or by the Apostolic see. Clement the Fourteenth (Ganganelli), when he refused to continue to the Chevalier the public *honours* previously enjoyed by his father and himself at Rome, where a canopy, decorated with the royal arms of Great Britain, was erected over their box in the theatre; retrenched likewise the pecuniary *appointments*, antecedently paid him out of the treasury of St. Peter. Nor do I believe that they were restored by Pius the Sixth, after his election to the papal chair in 1775; but the *Pretender's* income at the time of which I speak, might be estimated at more than five thousand pounds sterling: a sum fully adequate, at Florence, to maintain an establishment becoming his situation.

His faculties, even in their zenith, appear to have been very moderate: but his valour, though not heroic, was never, I believe, called in question by the Scots, during his campaign in 1745 and 1746; as that of Charles the Second had been doubted in 1652, at the battle of Worcester; and as James the Second's courage was questioned, on various occasions, both as Lord High Admiral on the water, during the two Dutch wars under his brother's reign, and on the land. Charles the First is indeed the only prince of the Stuart race, after their accession to the English throne, whose

bravery, conspicuously displayed at Edge Hill, at Newbury, at Naseby, and in many other battles or encounters, during the course of the civil wars, equally sustained him in the last act of his life, on the scaffold. In 1779, Charles Edward exhibited to the world a very humiliating spectacle. At the theatre, where he appeared almost every evening, he was conducted by his domestics, who laid him on a species of sofa, in the back part of his box; while the Countess d'Albany, his consort, occupied the front seat during the whole performance. Count Alfieri, a man singularly eccentric in his mind, habits, and manners, — whose dramatic productions have since rendered him known; — her "*cavaliero servante*," always attended on her in public, according to the established usages of society throughout Italy. As, for obvious reasons, English subjects could not be presented to a man who still laid claim to the British crown; no opportunity of distinctly seeing the Chevalier de St. George, offered itself, except across the theatre: and even there he lay concealed, as I have already observed, on account of his infirmities: rarely coming forward to view.

Being desirous, therefore, to obtain a more accurate idea of his face and person, than could be acquired at such a distance; I took my station, one evening, at the head of a private staircase, near the door by which, when the performance closed, he quitted the playhouse. Previous to my leaving England in 1777, his majesty had been pleased, at the application of Lord Robert Manners, who then commanded the third Regiment of Dragoon Guards, to give me a lieutenant's commission; and Lord Robert had allowed me to wear his uniform, which I had on at the time. The present Gen. Manners, now first equerry to the king, and who has represented the town of Cambridge in Parliament for a great number of years; then a cornet in his father's regiment, dressed in the same uniform, and actuated by a similar curiosity, accompanied me. As soon as the chevalier approached near enough to distinguish the English regimental, he instantly stopped, gently shook off the two servants who supported him, one on each side; and taking off his hat, po-

lately saluted us. He then passed on to his carriage, sustained by the two attendants, as he descended the staircase. I could not help, as I looked at him, recollecting the series of dangers and escapes which he underwent or effected, for successive months, among the Hebrides, after his defeat at Culloden : a chain of adventures which has no parallel among modern nations, except in those equally extraordinary hardships which distinguished the flight of Charles the Second from Worcester; or in the romantic extremities to which Stanislaus, King of Poland, was reduced in 1734, after his evasion and flight from Dantzic. Mrs. Lane gave to the former of those princes, the same noble proofs of disinterested devotion, which Flora Macdonald displayed towards the *Pretender* : and both were eminently indebted for their final preservation, to female honour or loyalty. Charles Edward's complexion was dark, and he manifestly bore the same family resemblance to his grandfather James the Second, that his Britannic majesty's countenance presents to George the First, or to the late king. On the occasion just related, he wore, besides the decorations of the order of the *garter*, a velvet great coat, which his infirm health rendered necessary, even in summer, on coming out of the theatre; and a cocked hat, the sides of which were half drawn up with gold twist. His whole figure, paralytic and debilitated, presented the appearance of great bodily decay.

The strength of his mind had likewise become extinct at this time; and with the decline of his intellectual powers, the suavity of his temper forsaking him, he became irritable, morose, and intractable, particularly in his family. An unhappy propensity to wine, which he gratified to excess, while it enervated his system, rendered him frequently an object of pity or of contempt, when in public; divesting him of that dignity which would otherwise have always accompanied the descendant and representative of so many kings. His misfortunes, exile, and anomalous situation, aggravated by mortifications of various kinds which he had undergone, both in France and at Rome; probably induced him to have recourse to the grape, for procuring

oblivion, or dispensing temporary felicity. That melancholy indulgence extinguished the last hope which fortune ever tendered him of ascending the throne of England, justly forfeited by the tyranny and imbecile bigotry of James the Second.

I know from high authority, that as late as the year 1770, the Duke de Choiseul, then First Minister of France, not deterred by the ill success of the attempts made in 1715, and in 1745, meditated to undertake a third effort for restoring the House of Stuart. His enterprising spirit led him to profit of the dispute which arose between the English and Spanish crowns, respecting the possession of Falkland Islands, in order to accomplish the object. As the first step necessary towards it, he despatched a private emissary to Rome, who signified to Charles Edward, the duke's desire of seeing him immediately at Paris. He complied, and arrived in that city with the utmost privacy. Having announced it to Choiseul, the minister fixed the same night, at twelve o'clock, when he and the Marshal de Broglio would be ready to receive the *Pretender*, and to lay before him their plan for an invasion of England. The Hotel de Choiseul was named for the interview, to which he was enjoined to repair in a hackney coach, disguised, and without any attendant. At the appointed time, the duke and the marshal, furnished with the requisite papers and instructions drawn up for his conduct on the expedition, were ready; but, after waiting a full hour, expecting his appearance every instant, when the clock struck one, they concluded that some unforeseen accident must have intervened to prevent his arrival. Under this impression they were preparing to separate, when the noise of wheels were heard in the court yard; and a few moments afterwards, the Pretender entered the room, in a state of such intoxication, as to be utterly incapable even of ordinary conversation. Disgusted, as well as indignant, at this disgraceful conduct, and well convinced that no expedition undertaken for the restoration of a man so lost to every sense of decency or self-interest, could be crowned with success; Choiseul, without hesitation, sent him, next morning, a

peremptory order to quit the French dominions. The *Pretender* returned to Italy; and the nobleman who related to me these particulars, being in company with the late Duke of Gloucester, in 1770, while walking together in the streets of Genoa, met the Chevalier de St. George, then on his way back from France to Rome. The Duke de Choiseul was soon afterwards dismissed by Louis the Fifteenth, and new principles of policy were adopted in the cabinet of Versailles. The contest respecting the Falkland Islands being accommodated, peace continued to subsist between the courts of France and England: while Charles Edward, driven by the mortifications which he experienced at Rome, to abandon that city, sought refuge at Florence; where he finished, in January, 1788, his inglorious career, as James the Second had done in 1701, at the palace of St. Germain, in the vicinity of Paris.

Louisa of Stolberg, Countess d'Albany, his consort, merited a more agreeable partner, and might, herself, have graced a throne. When I saw her at Florence, though she had been long married, she was not quite twenty-seven years of age. Her person was formed on a small scale: she had a fair complexion, delicate features, and lively, as well as attractive manners. Born Princess of Stolberg-Gedern, she excited great admiration on her first arrival from Germany; but in 1779, no hope of issue by the chevalier could be any longer entertained; and their mutual infelicity had attained to such a height, that she made various ineffectual attempts to obtain a separation. The French court may indeed be censured, in the eye of policy, for not having earlier negotiated and concluded the Pretender's marriage, if it was desired to perpetuate the Stuart line of claimants to the English crown. When Charles Edward espoused the Princess of Stolberg, he had passed his fiftieth year, was broken in constitution, and debilitated by excesses of many kinds. Previous to his decease, she quitted Italy, and finally established herself at Paris. In the year 1787, I have passed the evening at her residence, the Hotel de Bourgogne, situate in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, where she supported an elegant establishment; Her person then still retained

many pretensions to beauty; and her deportment, unassuming, but dignified, set off her attractions. In one of the apartments stood a canopy, with a chair of state, on which were displayed the royal arms of Great Britain; and every piece of plate, down to the very teaspoons, were ornamented in a similar manner. Some of the more massy pieces, which were said to have belonged to Mary of Modena, James the Second's queen, seemed to revive the extinct recollections of the revolution of 1688. A numerous company, both English and French, male and female, was assembled under her roof, by all of whom she was addressed only as Countess d'Albany: but her own domestics, when serving her, invariably gave her the title of majesty. The honours of a queen were in like manner paid her by the nuns of all those convents in Paris, which she was accustomed to visit on certain holidays or festivals. She continued to reside in the capital of France, till the calamitous progress of the French revolution, compelling her to abandon that country, she repaired to London; where she found not only personal protection, but new resources in the liberality and bounty of George the Third.

While I am engaged on the adventures of the Stuart family, I shall commemorate a fact, which will probably impress every reader with astonishment. Dining at the present Earl of Hardwick's, in London, with a large company, in June, 1796; among the persons present, was the late Sir John Dalrymple, known by his "History of England," and "State Papers." The conversation turning on historical subjects, he assured us that the Princess Sophia, mother of King George the First, who would have ascended the throne of Great Britain in her own person, if she had not died about seven weeks before Queen Anne; was nevertheless a determined Jacobite in her political principles. On our expressing the amazement which such an assertion was calculated to produce, he declared, that while he was occupied in looking over the memorable chest preserved in Kensington palace, from which, in the beginning of the present reign, he took the State Papers given by him to the world; he found a bundle of letters, marked on

the back, in King William's own handwriting, "Letters of the Electress Sophia to the court of St. Germain's." Having perused them, he ascertained beyond any doubt, that Sophia was really engaged in close correspondence with James the Second, and attached to his interests, in opposition to those of William. Lord Rochford, who was then secretary of state, having procured for Sir John Dalrymple, permission from his majesty to examine and publish the papers in question; he immediately communicated to that nobleman his discovery: requesting, at the same time, his lordship's sanction or approbation, in giving to the world the letters of the Electress Sophia. "Publish them by all means, Jack," answered he. Thus empowered from such authority, Dalrymple destined them without delay for the press: but before he had time to get the letters copied, Lord Rochford sent to him, desiring to have them delivered back to himself, in order that he might submit them to his majesty's inspection; he having, on more mature reflection, judged it proper to take the king's pleasure on a matter of such delicacy and singularity. Dalrymple returned them, therefore, to Lord Rochford, who carried them to the queen's house, and presented the bundle to his majesty. But they were neither restored, nor was even any allusion to them ever made in conversation by the king; he no doubt conceiving it more judicious to commit such documents to the flames, than to permit their publication. However extraordinary this anecdote may appear, it ought not to surprise, on full consideration, that Sophia should feel the warmest attachment to James the Second. He was very nearly related to her by consanguinity; *her* mother, Elizabeth, the unfortunate Queen of Bohemia, and Charles the First, *his* father, being brother and sister. Nor could Sophia, during many years subsequent to the revolution of 1688, nourish the slightest expectation of being called to the British throne, while the Princess Anne and her issue interposed between the House of Brunswick and that succession. It was not till after the death of William, the young Duke of Gloucester, in 1700, when the Princess Sophia and her descendants being named by act of

parliament to succeed eventually to the crown of Great Britain, as the nearest protestant heirs of the royal line; her interests from that period became opposed to the right of blood existing in the Stuart race.

Brussels, where I made a short stay in the summer of the same year, 1779, exhibited another prince in a state of physical and mental infirmity, not less calculated to excite pity than the *Pretender*. The Austrian Netherlands were at that time administered, as they had been almost ever since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, by Prince Charles of Lorraine, as representative of the empress queen. His double alliance, both by consanguinity and by marriage, with the emperor Francis and Maria Theresa; being brother to the former, and having married the sister of the latter sovereign;—these qualities and pretensions, rather than any mental endowments, civil or military, had raised him to the government of the low countries, the most enviable delegation of sovereign power then existing in Europe. Neither Hungary, nor the Milanese, nor Sicily, nor Sardinia, nor Ireland, nor Norway, could enter into any political competition with the rich provinces of Flanders, Haynault, and Brabant. Brussels constituted one of the most pleasing, as well as elegant, courts of the continent; its local position, almost central between Germany, Holland, France, and England, rendering it far more important in a diplomatic point of view, than either Venice, Turin, Warsaw, or Naples; perhaps I might add, even than Copenhagen or Stockholm. Prince Charles of Lorraine having been bred to the profession of arms from his early youth, and possessing an athletic frame of body, united with unquestionable personal courage, had more than once nominally commanded the Austrian armies. His passage of the Rhine, in 1744, and his irruption into Alsace, acquired him a degree of reputation, which he by no means afterwards preserved during the memorable "Seven Years War." To Frederic, King of Prussia, he formed, indeed, a most unequal antagonist, as that great prince sufficiently proved at the battle of Lissa in December, 1757, where he defeated the Austrians, and on many other occasions. When I was

presented to Prince Charles, in August, 1779, he might be regarded as performing the last of the seven ages of man, and as sinking fast into "mere oblivion." At his levee he seemed apparently unconscious of any thing beyond the mere ceremony of the hour, even his speech and articulation being rendered very indistinct by a paralytic affection. He expired in the following summer, at his palace in the vicinity of Brussels, regretted by the Flemings for his moderation; and was succeeded in the government general of the Netherlands, by the Archduchess Christina, the favourite daughter of the empress queen Maria Theresa.

Never did a deeper political gloom overspread England than in the autumn of 1779, when I arrived in London from the continent. I question whether at the time of the destruction of the ships of war lying in the Medway, burnt by the Dutch, under Charles the Second; or after the defeat of the English and Dutch combined fleets by the French, off Beachy-Head, in 1690, under William and Mary; which constitute two of the most calamitous epochas in our history; greater despondency, consternation, and general dissatisfaction, prevailed throughout the kingdom. The disgraceful naval campaign of 1778, in which Keppel's engagement off Ushant, forms the principal or only feature; had been succeeded by another year of hostilities, still more humiliating to Great Britain.—D'Orvilliers, at the head of the fleets of France and Spain, rode master of the channel for a considerable time; and the total want of enterprise, or of information on their part, alone saved the town, as well as the dockyards at Plymouth, from falling into the enemy's possession.—Not only was the place in want of many indispensable articles requisite to repel an attack; even flints for supplying the muskets, however incredible the fact may appear, were deficient. Sir Charles Hardy, who commanded our fleet; inferior in number of ships, and unapprized of the enemy's approach to the coast of England, remained quietly cruising in the Atlantic, while they thus menaced our shores. Happily the defect of intelligence, or want of mutual confidence, in the combined squadrons,

supplied every ministerial neglect; and extricated the country from a calamity, which, had it taken place, must have shaken not only the administration, but would have convulsed the throne itself. Faction did not, however, less pervade the navy, where the respective adherents of Keppel and of Palliser, carried their reciprocal rancour to the utmost height. The American war, after four unsuccessful campaigns, began to grow odious to the nation: while the administration, depressed under the weight of a contest, to which the talents of the great Earl of Chatham might have been found unequal, did not manifest or exert the energy demanded by the nature of the emergency. Even the king, notwithstanding a display of private virtues, which since Charles the First had not been exhibited by any sovereign of Great Britain, not even by William the Third, yet fully participated in the unpopularity of his ministers. As he was supposed to feel a more than common interest in effecting the reduction of his revolting subjects, so he was believed to exert a more than ordinary personal influence over the cabinet which directed the operations of the war.

After the return of Lord Howe in 1778, from his unsuccessful campaigns in America, the supreme naval command on that coast, as well as in the West Indies, devolved on Admiral Byron. He was a brother of Lord Byron, whose fatal duel with Mr. Chaworth, rendered him unfortunately too conspicuous in the journals of the House of Peers. At an early period of his life, having been wrecked on the desert coast of Patagonia, not far from Cape Horn, with Captain Cheap, in the "Wager" frigate, he there endured those inconceivable hardships, of which he has left us an interesting narrative. An intrepid and skilful, no less than an experienced naval officer, he was nevertheless deficient in the judgment, promptitude, and decision of character, requisite for conducting the operations of a numerous fleet. On the element of the water an evil destiny seemed invariably to accompany him, from his first expedition under Commodore Anson, down to the close of his professional life. So well was this fact known in the navy, that the sailors bestowed on him the name of "Foul Weather Jack," and

esteemed themselves certain of stormy weather whenever they sailed under his command. From the time of his leaving England in 1778, till his return about two years afterwards, all the tempests of the deep seemed to have conspired against him. No man could less say of himself, with *Æolus*, or rather with *Holstenius*,

"Ventorumque facis tempestatumque potentem ;"

Virgil having written the line,

"Nimborumque facis tempestatumque potentem ;"

During the action which Byron fought with D'Estaing, in July, 1779, off Grenada, all the characteristic valour of the British was displayed, not only by the crews, but, by the captains and their commander. Yet the honours of the day were divided, while the advantages of it were reaped by France; though the slaughter of men on the side of the French prodigiously exceeded our loss. But, the West India Islands, one after another, fell into the enemy's hands; and after the surrender of Grenada, when D'Estaing quitted Martinico, to carry the arms of Louis the Sixteenth against Savannah, the capital of Georgia, he triumphantly swept the coast of America. We must reluctantly confess, that the navy of England at this period of the present reign, had sunk to a point of depression hardly conceivable, when compared with the times of Hawke, Saunders, and Boscawen; or if placed near the still more splendid period of Jervis, Duncan, and Nelson. We may incline to attribute so extraordinary a contrast, to the errors or inability of Lord North's administration: the popular voice, I well know, sanctioned that accusation: but, its cause lay principally in the nature of the contest, which depressing the national energy, and dividing the public opinion, unnerved the British spirit, and allowed France, during near four years, from 1778 to 1782, aided by Spain, to make such exertions, as acquired them a temporary ascendant on the ocean. Byron, recalled from his command, soon afterwards revisited England, and his name occurs no more in our naval his-

tory: but, it has derived new celebrity in the present times, from the poetic eminence to which his grandson has attained, by productions emulating, perhaps surpassing, the fame of Spenser, of Gray, of Mason, and of Scott.

To Byron, succeeded Rodney, who fills so distinguished a place during the unfortunate period of the American war; a naval commander as much distinguished by the prosperous fatality which attended him, as Byron seemed to be under the influence of an unlucky planet. Cardinal Mazarin, who, before he employed any individual, always asked, *"Est-il heureux?"* had he been first minister of England, might have selected Rodney for active service upon that principle, from among all the admirals in the navy. His person was more elegant than seemed to become his rough profession. There was even something that approached to delicacy and effeminacy in his figure: but no man manifested a more temperate and steady courage in action. I had the honour to live in great personal intimacy with him, and have often heard him declare, that superiority to fear was not in him the physical effect of constitution; on the contrary, no man being more sensible by nature to that passion than himself: but, that he surmounted it from the considerations of honour and public duty. Like the famous Marshal Villars, he justly incurred the reputation of being *"glorieux et bavard ;"* making himself frequently the theme of his own discourse. He talked much and freely upon every subject; concealed nothing in the course of conversation, regardless who were present; and dealt his censures, as well as his praises, with imprudent liberality; qualities which necessarily procured him many enemies, particularly in his own profession. Throughout his whole life, two passions, both highly injurious to his repose, the love of women and of play, carried him into many excesses. It was universally believed that he had been distinguished in his youth by the personal attachment of the Princess Amelia, daughter of George the Second, who displayed the same partiality for Rodney, which her cousin, the Princess Amelia of Prussia, manifested for Trenck. A living evidence of the former connexion.

existed, unless fame had recourse to fiction for support. But, detraction in every age, from Elizabeth down to the present times, has not spared the most illustrious females.

The gaming table had proved more ruinous in its effects to Rodney, and that indulgence compelled him, after quitting England, to take refuge at Paris. So great was his pecuniary distress while he resided in the French capital, as to induce him to send over his second wife to London, early in 1777, with the view of procuring a subscription to be opened among the members of the club at White's, for his relief. Lady Rodney, finding it however impracticable to raise any supplies from that source; after much ineffectual solicitation among Sir George's former friends, finally renounced the attempt. The old Marshal de Biron having soon afterwards, by an act of liberality, enabled Rodney to revisit his country, he made the strongest applications to the admiralty for employment. His private circumstances, indeed, imperiously demanded every exertion, when he was named, towards the autumn of 1779, to command the expedition then fitting out at Portsmouth, for the West Indies. I passed much time with him, at his residence in Cleveland row, St. James's, down to the very moment of his departure. Naturally sanguine and confident, he anticipated in his daily conversation, with a sort of certainty, the future success which he should obtain over the enemy; and he had not only already conceived, but he had delineated on paper, the naval manœuvre of breaking, or intersecting the line, to which he afterwards was indebted in an eminent degree, for his brilliant victory over De Grasse: — a manœuvre then new in maritime tactics, though now become familiar to us; and which Nelson practised with such decisive effect, in the battle of the Nile, as well as on other occasions. Rodney possessed no superior intellectual parts; but unlike Keppel, his enterprising spirit always impelled him rather to risk, than to act with caution, when in presence of an enemy. The ardour of his character supplied in some degree, the physical defects of his health and constitution, already impaired by various causes while his happy audacity, di-

rected by the nautical skill of others, controlled by science, and propelled by favourable circumstances, at length enabled him to dissipate the gloom that had so long overhung our naval annals, at the same time that he covered himself with great personal glory.

The ministry sustained about this time a diminution of strength, and a loss of talents, in the House of Peers, which an administration so unpopular could ill afford, by the defection of Lord Lyttelton, who suddenly went over to the side of opposition. His decease, not less sudden in its nature, took place immediately afterwards. He was a man of very considerable parliamentary abilities, who, notwithstanding the many glaring vices of his private character, might have made a conspicuous political figure, if he had not been carried off in the prime of life. His father, the first Lord Lyttelton, well known as an historian and a poet; derived not less respect in his private capacity, from the elevation of his mind, and his many domestic virtues. The second Lord Lyttelton, by the profligacy of his conduct, and the abuse of his talents, seemed to emulate Dryden's Duke of Buckingham, or Pope's Duke of Wharton; both of whom he resembled in the superiority of his natural endowments, as well as in the peculiarity of his end. Villiers, the "Zimri" of Dryden's poem of "Absalom and Achitophel;" after exhausting his health, and squandering his immense fortune in every species of excess or riot, expired, as is well known, at a wretched tenement, on his own estate near Helmsley in Yorkshire, abandoned by all his former followers or admirers. Wharton, who acted a part under George the First, hardly less distinguished or eccentric, than Villiers had performed under Charles the Second; prematurely terminated his equally extraordinary career, exiled and attainted, among the Pyrenees, in an obscure monastery of Catalonia; worn out, like Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, by his pursuit of pleasures. Lyttelton, when scarcely thirty-six, breathed his last at a country house near Epsom, called Pit Place, from its situation in a chalk-pit: where he witnessed, as he conceived, a supernatural appearance.

Having gone down there for the pur-

poses of recreation, with a gay party of both sexes, several individuals among whom I personally knew; he had retired to bed, when a noise which resembled the fluttering of a dove or pigeon, heard at his chamber window, attracted his attention. He then saw, or thought he saw, a female figure, which approaching the foot of the bed, announced to him that in three days precisely from that time, he should be called away from this state of existence. In whatever manner the supposed intimation was conveyed, whether by sound or by impression, it is certain that Lord Lyttelton considered the circumstance as real; that he mentioned it as such, to those persons who were in the house with him; that it deeply affected his mind, and that he died on the third night, at the predicted hour. About four years afterwards, in the year 1783, dining at Pit Place, I had the curiosity to visit the bed-chamber, where the casement window, at which, as Lord Lyttelton asserted, the dove appeared to flutter, was pointed out to me. And at his step-mother's, the Dowager Lady Lyttelton's house in Portugal-street, Grosvenor square, who, being a woman of very lively imagination, lent an implicit faith to all the supernatural facts, which were supposed to have accompanied or produced Lord Lyttelton's end; I have frequently seen a painting, which she herself executed in 1780, intended expressly to commemorate the event. It hung in a conspicuous part of her drawing-room. There, the dove appears at the window; while a female figure, habited in white, stands at the bed foot, announcing to Lord Lyttelton his approaching dissolution. Every part of the picture was faithfully designed after the description given her by the valet de chambre who attended him, to whom his master related all the circumstances. This man assured Lady Lyttelton, that on the night indicated, Lord Lyttelton, who, notwithstanding his endeavours to surmount the impression, had suffered under great depression of spirits during the three preceding days, retired to bed before twelve o'clock. Having ordered the valet to mix him some rhubarb, he sat up in the bed, apparently in health, intending to swallow the medicine; but, being in want of a tea-spoon, which the

servant had neglected to bring, his master, with a strong expression of impatience, sent him for a spoon. He was not absent from the room more than the space of a minute; but, when he returned, Lord Lyttelton, who had fallen back, lay motionless in that attitude. No efforts to restore animation were attended with success. Whether, therefore, his death was occasioned by any new attack upon his nerves, or happened in consequence of an apoplectic or other seizure, must remain matter of uncertainty and conjecture.

It is however to be observed, that the Lyttelton family, either from constitutional nervous irritability, or from other causes, was peculiarly susceptible of impressions similar to the shock which seems to have produced Lord Lyttelton's end. His father, though a man of very distinguished talents, as well as of high moral principle, manifested great credulity, as I have been assured, on the subject of apparitions: and his cousin, Miss Lyttelton, who married the present Sir Richard Hoare, died in a way somewhat similar, about four years later, at his beautiful seat of Stourhead in the county of Wilts. The second Lord Lyttelton's life had likewise been of a nature and description so licentious, not to say abandoned, as to subject him continually to the keenest reproaches of an accusing conscience. This domestic spectre, which accompanied him everywhere, was known to have given rise, while on his travels, particularly at Lyons, to scenes greatly resembling his last moments. Among the females who had been the objects and the victims of his temporary attachment, was a Mrs. Dawson, whose fortune, as well as her honour and reputation, fell a sacrifice to her passion. Being soon forsaken by him, she did not long survive; and distress of mind was known to have accelerated, if not to have produced, her death. It was her image which haunted his pillow, and was supposed by him to have announced his approaching dissolution, at Pit Place.

Lord North, who had presided during ten years at the head of administration, continued in the spring of 1780, to struggle with the utmost difficulty through the sixth session of parliament against a numerous and augmenting opposition in

both houses. His resignation, anxiously anticipated by his political enemies, seemed to be inevitable, and even imminent: but, the ministerial disgraces, as well as the triumphs of the adverse party, were equally obliterated in a calamity, which, for the time of its duration, absorbed all attention. — I mean, the riots of June, 1780. No event commemorated in our annals, bear any analogy with the scene then exhibited in the capitol, except the fire of London under Charles the Second. Even that misfortune wanted some of the melancholy and sanguinary features, which characterized the tumults in question. During the conflagration of 1666, whatever stories may have been invented by party rage, or inscribed at the time on public monuments by religious antipathy, the inhabitants had only to contend with the progress of a devouring element. In 1780, the flames were originally kindled, as well as rendered far more destructive, by a populace of the lowest and vilest description, who carried with them, wherever they moved, the materials of universal ruin. It was only in their blood, by the interposition of an overwhelming military force, that the convulsion became finally arrested: and that London, after being desolated by fire, was rescued from plunder, bankruptcy, and subversion. Even the French revolution, which from July, 1789, down to April, 1814, either under the forms of a republic or of a military despotism, has presented to mankind a pattern of every crime revolting and degrading to human nature: yet did not produce in the capital of France any similar outrages. At Lyons, it must be admitted that Collot d'Herbois in 1793, exercised the most savage vengeance on the buildings of the city, as well as on the unfortunate inhabitants. But, neither Robespierre, nor Bonaparte, though the former ruffian converted the metropolis into a charnel-house; and though the vengeance, or atrocious ambition of the latter adventurer, has covered Europe with human bones, from the Tagus to the Moskwa; yet ever directed their destructive efforts against the public and private edifices of Paris.

I was personally present at many of the most tremendous effects of the popular fury, on the memorable 7th of June,

the night on which it attained its highest point. About nine o'clock on that evening, accompanied by three other gentlemen, who, as well as myself, were alarmed at the accounts brought in every moment, of the outrages committed; and of the still greater acts of violence meditated, as soon as darkness should favour and facilitate their further progress; we set out from Portland-Place, in order to view the scene. Having got into a hackney-coach, we drove first to Bloomsbury-square; attracted to that spot by a rumour generally spread, that Lord Mansfield's residence, situate at the north-east corner, was either already burnt or destined for destruction. Hart Street and Great Russel-Street, presented, each, to the view, as we passed, large fires composed of furniture taken from the houses of magistrates or other obnoxious individuals. Quitting the coach we crossed the square, and had scarcely got under the wall of Bedford House, when we heard the door of Lord Mansfield's house burst open with violence. In a few minutes, all the contents of the apartments being precipitated from the windows, were piled up, and wrapt in flames. A file of foot soldiers arriving, drew up near the blazing pile; but, without either attempting to quench the fire, or to impede the mob, who were indeed far too numerous to admit of being dispersed, or even intimidated, by a small detachment of infantry. The populace remained masters; while we, after surveying the spectacle for a short time, moved on into Holborn, where Mr. Langdale's dwelling house and warehouses afforded a more appalling picture of devastation. They were altogether enveloped in smoke and flame. In front had assembled an immense multitude of both sexes, many of whom were females, and not a few held infants in their arms. All appeared to be, like ourselves, attracted as spectators solely by curiosity, without taking any part in the acts of violence. Spirituous liquors in great quantity ran down the kennel of the street, and numbers of the populace were already intoxicated with this beverage. So little disposition, however, did they manifest to riot or pillage, that it would have been difficult to conceive who were the authors and perpetrators of such enormous mischief, if we had not dis-

tingly seen at the windows of the house, men, who, while the floors and rooms were on fire, calmly tore down the furniture, and threw it into the street, or tossed it into the flames. They experienced no kind of opposition, during a considerable time that we remained at this place; but, a party of horse guards arriving, the terrified crowd instantly began to disperse; and we, anxious to gratify our farther curiosity, continued our progress on foot, along Holborn, towards Fleet-market.

I would in vain attempt adequately to describe the spectacle which presented itself, when we reached the declivity of the hill, close to St. Andrew's church. The other house and magazines of Mr. Langdale, who, as a catholic, had been selected for the blind vengeance of the mob; situated in the hollow space near the north end of fleet-market, threw up into the air a pinnacle of flame resembling a volcano. Such was the brilliant and beautiful effect of the illumination, that St. Andrew's church appeared to be almost scorched by the heat of so prodigious a body of fire; and the figures designated on the clock, were as distinctly perceptible as at noonday. It resembled indeed a tower, rather than a private building, in a state of conflagration; and would have inspired the beholder with a sentiment of admiration allied to pleasure, if it had been possible to separate the object, from its causes and its consequences. The wind did not however augment its rage on this occasion; for the night was serene, and the sky unclouded, except when it became obscured by the volumes of smoke, which, from time to time, produced a temporary darkness. The mob, which completely blocked up the whole street in every part, and in all directions, prevented our approaching within fifty or sixty yards of the building; but the populace, though still principally composed of persons allured by curiosity, yet evidently began here to assume a more disorderly and ferocious character. Troops, either horse or foot, we still saw none; nor, in the midst of this combination of tumult, terror, and violence, had the ordinary police ceased to continue its functions. While we stood by the wall of St. Andrew's church-yard, a watchman, with his lanthorn in

his hand, passed us, calling the hour, as if in a time of profound tranquillity.

Finding it altogether impracticable to force our way any further down Holborn-hill, and hearing that the Fleet prison had been set on fire; we penetrated through a number of narrow lanes, behind St. Andrew's church, and presently found ourselves in the middle of Fleet-market. Here the same destruction raged, but in a different stage of its progress. Mr. Langdale's two houses were already at the height of their demolition; the Fleet prison on the contrary was only beginning to blaze, and the sparks or flaming particles that filled the air, fell so thick upon us on every side, as to render unsafe its immediate vicinity. Meanwhile we began to hear the platoons discharged on the other side of the river, towards St. George's Fields; and were informed, that a considerable number of the rioters had been killed on Black-friars bridge, which was occupied by the troops. On approaching it, we beheld the king's bench prison completely enveloped in flames. It exhibited a sublime sight, and we might be said there to stand in a central point, from whence London offered on every side, before, as well as behind us, the picture of a city sacked and abandoned to a ferocious enemy. The shouts of the populace, the cries of women, the crackling of the fires, the blaze reflected in the stream of the Thames, and the irregular firing which was kept up both in St. George's Fields, as well as toward the quarter of the mansion-house, and the bank;—all these sounds or images combined, left scarcely any thing for the imagination to supply; presenting to the view every recollection, which the classic description of Troy or of Rome, in the page of Virgil, or of Tacitus, have impressed on the mind in youth, but which I so little expected to see exemplified in the capital of Great Britain.

Not yet satisfied, and hearing that an obstinate conflict was going on at the bank, between the soldiery and the rioters, we determined, if possible, to reach that spot. We accordingly proceeded through St. Paul's church-yard towards it, and had advanced without impediment to the poultry, within about sixty paces of the mansion house, when our progress

was stopped by a sentinel, who acquainted us that the mob had been repulsed in their attempt upon the bank; but, that we could penetrate no further in that direction, as his orders were peremptory, not to suffer the passage of any person. Cheapside, silent and empty, unlike the streets that we had visited, presented neither the appearance of tumult, nor of confusion; though to the east, west and south, all was disorder. This contrast formed not the least striking circumstance of the moment. Prevented thus from approaching any nearer to the bank, finding the day begin to break, satiated in some measure with the scenes which we had witnessed, and wearied by so long a peregrination, which, from our first alighting near Bloomsbury square, had all been performed on foot; we resolved to return to the west end of the town. On Ludgate hill we were fortunate enough to meet with a hackney coach, which conveyed us safely back, about four o'clock in the morning.

It is impossible for the most prejudiced person, without violating truth, to accuse the opposition of having had any participation as a body, direct or indirect, in these outrages. They were indeed, themselves, individually, the objects of popular prejudice and violence, not less than the ministers; Sir George Savile's house in Leicester square, having been one of the first buildings assailed and plundered by the mob. Devonshire house in Piccadilly, menaced with the same fate, was considered as so insecure, that the Duchess of Devonshire yielding to her fears, did not venture to remain in it after dusk, for a considerable time. She took refuge at Lord Clermont's in Berkeley square, where she deemed herself safe from attack: and lay down for successive nights, on a sofa, or a small tent bed, placed in the drawing-room. Many other persons of both sexes, of the highest rank, either quitted their own dwellings, or sent their most valuable effects and jewels into the country. The first minister, Lord North, passed that alarming night, at his official residence in Downing street; accompanied by a few friends, who had repaired thither to offer him their personal aid, if circumstances should render it necessary for his protection.

One of those gentlemen, Sir John Macpherson, has often recounted to me the particulars of that memorable evening, which I shall give in his own words, and which will be perused with no common interest. "A day or two before the 7th of June," said he, "Count Maltzahn, the Prussian minister at our court, called on me at Kensington Gore, where I then resided, and informed me that the mob had determined to attack the bank. He added, that the fact had come to his knowledge through an authentic channel, on the accuracy of which I might depend. Having conveyed this intelligence immediately to Lord North, I received, on the morning of that day, an intimation to be at his house in Downing street at dinner. When I got there, I found Mr. Eden (since created Lord Auckland), the honourable General Simon Fraser, the honourable John St. John, and Colonel North, afterwards Earl of Guilford. Mr. Brummell, Lord North's private secretary, who lived likewise in the same street, was in attendance, but did not make one of the company. We sat down at table, and dinner had scarcely been removed, when Downing square, through which there is no outlet, became thronged with people, who manifested a disposition, or rather a determination, to proceed to acts of outrage. Lord North, with his habitual good humour, observed to me, 'you see, Macpherson, here is much confusion. Who commands the upper tier?' 'I do,' answered Colonel North, 'and I have got twenty or more grenadiers well armed, stationed above stairs, who are ready, on the first order, to fire upon the mob.' General Fraser sat silent; while Mr. Eden, whose house was situated on the opposite side of the square, only remarked calmly to Colonel North, that if the grenadiers fired, their shot would probably enter his windows. The tumult without doors still continuing, and it being uncertain from one minute to another, whether the populace might not proceed to extremities; Lord North said to me, 'what is to be done, Macpherson?' 'My opinion,' answered I, 'is to send out two or three persons, who, mixing among the crowd, may acquaint them that there are troops posted in the house, ready, without waiting for the riot act being

read, to fire on them the instant that they commit any outrage; exhorting them at the same time, for their own sakes, to disperse peaceably without delay. But,' added I, '*Nous parlons de la Guerre devant Annibal*. Here sits General Fraser, who knows far better than any of us, what is wisest to be done, and who has not yet opened his mouth.' The populace continued to fill the little square, and became very noisy; but they never attempted to force the street door. Mr. St. John held a pistol in his hand; and Lord North, who never lost an occasion of jesting, exclaimed, 'I am not half so much afraid of the mob, as of Jack St. John's pistol. By degrees, as the evening advanced, the people, informed, from various quarters, that there were soldiers posted in the house, prepared to fire if they committed any violence; began to cool, and afterwards gradually to disperse without further effort. We then sat down again quietly at the table, and finished our wine.

"Night coming on, and the capital presenting a scene of tumult or conflagration in many various quarters, Lord North, accompanied by us all, mounted to the top of the house, where we beheld London blazing in seven places, and could hear the platoons regularly firing in various directions. 'What is your opinion of the remedy for this evil?' said Lord North to me. 'I should try, my lord,' answered I, 'to effect a junction, or to open some communication, with the heads of opposition, for the protection of the country.' 'You talk,' replied he, 'as if the thing could be done; but it is not practicable.' I know, however, that a day or two afterwards, notwithstanding the opinion so given by Lord North, he and Mr. Fox personally met; the former accompanied by Brummell, and the latter by Sheridan, behind the scenes at the opera-house in the haymarket, at eleven in the forenoon. They held a conference there; but of the nature of the conversation which passed between them, I am wholly ignorant." Such was Sir John Macpherson's account of the circumstances to which he was an eye-witness, at that moment of public calamity. He now remains the only survivor of the company that was con-

vened in Downing street, since the decease of Lord Auckland.

Lord George Germain, like the first minister, having assembled some friends for the purpose, barricaded the passages and entrance to his house in Pall Mall, which was very susceptible of defence; after which he coolly waited for the attack of the populace. But the rioters were too well informed of the precautions taken, to venture making any attempt on him. Even the king himself remained on foot, during the far greater part of that memorable night, which he passed between Buckingham house and the royal manège contiguous; into the latter of which buildings, a detachment of the horse guards had been early admitted, who were ready to have sallied out upon the insurgents. No man who knows the steadiness and firmness which his majesty has since displayed in the most trying situations, when his person has been exposed to danger; can doubt that he would have given on that occasion, had it been unfortunately necessary, the strongest proofs of courage. He would not have acted the tame and irresolute part which Louis the Sixteenth exhibited on the 10th of August, 1792; when, under similar circumstances, surrounded by a savage Jacobin mob, instead of defending himself to the last extremity, as he was bound to have done not only by every principle of self-preservation, but from regard to the interests of the French monarchy:—he abandoned the defence of his palace, and of his family, to take refuge in the national assembly. George the Third had embraced the resolution of repelling force by force, in case of necessity, and of perishing in support of the laws, of civil order, and regular government, rather than survive their extinction. But happily, no attempt was made by the populace to attack any part of the queen's house or officers.

Various were the opinions and assertions hazarded relative to the numbers that perished in the riots, between the third and the seventh of June, 1780: but, as no certain data can be obtained, beyond the official returns of killed and wounded, the amount must always remain matter of conjecture. Probably, it far exceeded the computation commonly

made; and from the concurring testimony of those persons who were most competent to form a sound judgment, I believe it would not be over-rated at seven hundred individuals, killed and wounded. The slaughter was most considerable at the King's bench, at the bank, and on Blackfriars bridge. Col. de Burgh, a son of the Earl of Clanrickard, commanded one of the regiments sent to St. George's Fields. All the troops did their duty, notwithstanding the efforts which the populace exerted to seduce them, by calling on them as protestants, and invoking their aid or their protection. Many of the soldiers, in reply to these blandishments, exclaimed that they would not hurt the mob. A great nobleman, now alive, who, like myself, was a spectator of all the scenes of devastation committed on that night; told me that he felt strong doubts whether De Burgh's regiment would actually draw the trigger. Impressed with that conviction, he mentioned his apprehensions on the point, to the colonel; who instantly replied, that he knew his men, and could rely on their prompt obedience. The event justified his confidence: for, no sooner had he given the word of command to fire, than, levelling their pieces, they soon compelled the rioters to seek their safety in immediate dispersion. If the "Gardes Francaises" in 1789, had behaved like our regular troops in 1780, the French revolution might have been suppressed in its birth; and Europe would not have groaned during fourteen years, under the accumulated calamities inflicted on it by Bonaparte. But, the difference of character between the two sovereigns of Great Britain and of France, constituted one great cause of the different fate that attended the two monarchies. George the Third, when attacked, prepared to defend his throne, his family, his country, and the constitution entrusted to his care. They were in fact principally saved by his decision. Louis the Sixteenth tamely abandoned all to a ferocious demoralized populace who sent him to the scaffold. No man of courage or of principle, could have quitted the former prince. It was impossible to save or to rescue, the latter ill-fated, yielding, and passive monarch.

Many of the rioters, who fell at Black-

friars bridge, or in its vicinity, where the slaughter was most considerable, were immediately thrown over into the Thames, by their companions. The carnage which took place at the bank likewise was great, though not of very long duration; and in order to conceal as much as possible, the magnitude of the number, as well as the names of the persons who perished, similar precautions were taken on both sides. All the dead bodies being carried away during the night, were precipitated into the river. Even the impressions made by the musket balls, on the houses opposite to the bank, were as much as possible erased on the following morning, and the buildings whitewashed. Government and the rioters seem to have felt an equal disposition, by drawing a veil over the extent of the calamity, to bury it in profound darkness. To Col. Holroyd, since deservedly raised to the British peerage as Lord Sheffield, and to his regiment of militia, the country was eminently indebted for repelling the fury of the mob at the bank; where, during some moments, the conflict seemed doubtful, and the assailants had nearly forced an entrance. Lord Algernon Percy, since created Earl of Beverley, marched likewise at the head of the Northumberland militia to the same spot. Their arrival, together with the energy, promptitude, and decision which Col. Holroyd manifested, principally conduced to ensure the safety of that great national establishment. Lord Sheffield, by his commercial disquisitions, and agricultural pursuits or productions, has since rendered scarcely less important services to his country. Nor ought he to be forgotten in another capacity, as the friend and the biographer of *Gibbon*, whose mortal remains repose under his protection, at Sheffield Place in Sussex. Numbers of the insurgents concealed their wounds, in order to evade discovery of the part which they had taken in the disorders of the capital. It is however indisputable, that almost all who perished, were of a low and obscure description.

If the populace had been conducted by leaders of system or ability, London must have been fundamentally overturned on that night. The bank, the India house, and the shops of the great bank-

ers, would in that case have been early attacked; instead of throwing away their rage, as they did, on popish chapels, private houses, and prisons. When they began, after their first fury had exhausted itself, to direct their blows more systematically and skilfully, the time for action was passed. Government, which was accused, perhaps with reason, of having appeared supine during the first days of June; awoke early enough to preserve the metropolis and public credit from sustaining the last shock of popular violence. In fact, from the instant that the three bridges over the Thames were occupied by regular troops, the danger was at an end. This awful convulsion, which, on Wednesday, the *seventh* of June, seemed to menace the destruction of every thing; was so completely quelled, and so suddenly extinguished, that on the *eighth*, hardly a spark survived of the popular effervescence. Some few persons in the borough of Southwark, attempted to repeat the outrages of Wednesday; but they were easily and immediately quelled by the military force. Never was a contrast exhibited more striking, than between those two evenings, in the same city. The patrols of cavalry, stationed in the squares and great streets, throughout the west end of the town, gave London the aspect of a garrison: while the camp which was immediately afterwards formed in St. James's Park, afforded a picturesque landscape; both sides of the canal, from the queen's house down to the vicinity of the horse guards, being covered with tents and troops.

The common danger, which united all parties for the time, extinguished, or at least, suspended, in some measure, even the virulence of political enmity. Alarmed at the prospect of impending destruction, some of the principal leaders of the opposition repaired unasked to St. James's, under pretence of offering their services to the administration; nearly as the Dukes of Somerset and Argyle had done in the last days of July, 1714, when Queen Anne lay insensible, near her end. The Marquis of Rockingham hearing that a privy council was summoned to meet on the morning of the 7th of June, which assembly, all who enjoined seats at that board, were invited to attend;

made his appearance in an undress, his hair disordered, and with testimonies of great consternation. Nor did he, when seated at the table, where the king was present, spare the ministers, for having, as he asserted, by their negligence, or want of timely energy, allowed the assemblage of people to take place in St. George's Fields, which original meeting led to all the subsequent outrages. It is nevertheless incontestable, that to the decision manifested by his majesty on that occasion, the safety of the metropolis, and its extrication from all the calamities that impended over it, was principally, if not solely, to be ascribed. Elizabeth, or William the Third, could not have displayed more calm and systematic courage in the highest sense of the term, than George the Third exhibited in so trying a moment. Far from throwing himself for support or guidance on his cabinet, as a prince of feeble character would have done; he came forward, and exhibited an example of self-devotion to his ministers.

It is well known that at the council to which I have alluded, the king assisted in person. The great question was there discussed, on which hinged the protection and preservation of the capital; a question respecting which, the first legal characters were divided; and on which, Lord Mansfield himself was with reason accused of never having clearly expressed his opinion up to that time. Doubts existed, whether persons riotously collected together, and committing outrages or infractions of the peace, however great, might legally be fired on by the military power, without staying previously to read the riot act. Lord Bathurst, President of the Council, and Sir Fletcher Norton, Speaker of the House of Commons, who were both present; on being appealed to for their opinion, declared that "a soldier was not less a citizen, because he was a soldier, and consequently that he might repel force by force;" but no minister would sign the order for the purpose. In this emergency, when every moment was precious, — Mr. Wedderburn, since successively raised to the dignity of a baron and of an earl of Great Britain, who was then attorney-general, having been called in to the council table, and ordered

by the king to deliver his official opinion on the point; stated in the most precise terms, that any such assemblage might be dispersed by military force, without waiting for forms, or reading the act in question. "Is that your declaration of the law as attorney-general?" said the king. Wedderburn answering decidedly in the affirmative, "Then so let it be done," rejoined his majesty. The attorney-general drew up the order immediately, which the king signed, and on which Lord Amherst acted, the same evening. The complete suppression of the riots followed in the course of a few hours. Never had any people a greater obligation to the judicious intrepidity of their sovereign! If Louis the Sixteenth would have acted with similar decision and self-devotion in the early stages of the French revolution, France might have been equally saved.

Nor ought we to deny the merit due to Wedderburn, for having with so much decision cut the Gordian knot, which the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, either could not, or would not untie. His inexplicit declarations on the subject, involuntarily remind us of the accusations levelled against him by "Junius," when, speaking of Lord Mansfield, he says, "Besides his natural timidity, it makes part of his political plan, never to be known to recommend violent measures. When the guards are called forth to murder their fellow subjects, it is not by the ostensible advice of Lord Mansfield." Here we see him in 1780, acting precisely as he had done twelve years earlier, in 1768. Nor is it a less curious and extraordinary fact, that the very exertion by which the king preserved London in June, 1780, from suffering the utmost extremities of violence and pillage, constitutes *as a principle* the subject of "Junius's severest reflections upon him, in March, 1770." "Did his majesty," says he, "consult the laws of this country, when he permitted his secretary of state to declare, that whenever the civil magistrate is trifled with, a military force must be sent for, *without the delay of a moment*, and effectually employed?" So true is it, that at every period of his life, the king manifested the same consistency of character, and superiority to personal ap-

prehension. When nevertheless we reflect that in 1768, a magistrate of the county of Surrey, had been capitally accused and brought to trial, for ordering the soldiery to fire on rioters engaged in the most violent acts of outrage in St. George's Fields, though the riot act had been twice read; we cannot be surprised at the apprehension displayed by Lord Mansfield, to sanction and authorise the same proceeding in 1780, and ought we lightly to censure his conduct. The sovereign alone, as first magistrate, impelled by the awful nature of the emergency, and he only, could have taken upon him so serious a responsibility.

No individual manifested more abhorrence of the rioters, or exposed himself by his declarations on that subject, to more personal danger, than Burke, whom his enemies accused of having been brought up in the tenets or principles of the Romish faith. This conduct did him great honour, and proved him superior to the meanness of party. His house in the broad sanctuary, Westminster, was threatened, but not attacked. Fox contented himself with condemning the authors of the disorders, but took no active part, as a member of the legislature, in their suppression. On the contrary, he refused to lend any personal support to government, when pressed in the House of Commons to co-operate for the extrication of the capital; though Burke, who was there present, loudly expressed his wish for unanimity and association in that moment of national distress. It is impossible not to recollect, that as they thus diverged in different lines during the riots of 1780, so in 1792, twelve years later, they exhibited a similar diversity of conduct; Burke lending his powerful aid to prop monarchial government, while Fox remained the advocate of republicanism, and the apologist of the French revolution. Wilkes, who in the early part of his majesty's reign, had made so glorious a resistance to general warrants, displayed as manly a resistance to popular violence, during the whole progress of the riots; and had he filled the chair of chief magistrate, instead of Kennett, would, unquestionably by his vigour, have prevented many or all the disgraceful scenes which took place in the capital.

All the proofs given by opposition, of their detestation for these calamitous exhibitions of popular fury, did not, however, produce complete conviction of their sincerity. Many persons still believed that some of the parliamentary leaders secretly fomented, or privately encouraged, the rioters. Suspicions were in particular thrown on the Earl of Shelburne, probably with great injustice. The natural expectation of effecting a change in ministry, was imagined to suspend or supersede in certain minds, every other consideration; and it was even pretended, though on very insufficient grounds, that peers did not scruple to take an active part in the worst excesses of the night of the 7th of June. Public clamour selected the Earl of Effingham as an object of accusation. It was generally asserted, that he had mingled with the rioters on Black-friars Bridge; that he had there been mortally wounded, and his body afterwards thrown into the river, by those of his own party; but, not till he had been identified and recognized by his dress, particularly by his laced ruffles. Those who were acquainted with that nobleman, and who knew his style of dress, instantly detected the absurdity, as well as falsity of the charge; for, no man was ever less distinguished by any ornaments of apparel. His sudden disappearance from London, where he certainly had been seen at the commencement of the riots; the general ignorance in which people remained of the place to which he had withdrawn; when added to his known, as well as violent, dislike to the administration, and to the American war; of which he had exhibited a singular proof, by renouncing his profession and his rank in the British army, only a few years earlier, rather than submit to serve against the insurgents beyond the Atlantic;—all these circumstances conduced, nevertheless, to maintain the delusion for a considerable time. At the beginning of the ensuing winter, he re-appeared in the House of Lords, in his usual health; and stated to his acquaintance, that early in June, he had gone down to his seat of Grainge Hall in Yorkshire, where he had ever since resided. Such persons as still remained incredulous, explained his absence by saying that he had been hurt or

wounded on the seventh of June; but it is probable that the report originated altogether in calumny.

Lord George Gordon, the primary author of these outrages, was not taken into custody, till two or three days after they had been suppressed. Ministers were reproached with not having committed him to the tower on the second of June, when he assembled, harangued, and excited the mob to extort compliance with their demands from the House of Commons. But, the attempt to seize, and to send him to prison, at a time when every avenue to the house was thronged with multitudes, when the lobby overflowed with them, and when the doors of the house itself might have been, every instant, forced in, would have formed an imprudent, not to say a dangerous experiment. It is difficult to find any instance in our annals, when parliament received a grosser insult; or when the members composing both houses, incurred a greater risk of falling victims to popular violence. The mobs of 1641, and of the following year, under Charles the First, directed their rage against the sovereign and his principal advisers, not against the representatives of the nation. Cromwell, when in 1653 he drove out and dissolved the Rump Parliament, offered no outrage to their persons, but simply broke up the legislative assembly by a military force. The tumults in 1733, when Sir Robert Walpole first attempted to introduce the excise laws, seem to form the nearest approach or similarity to the proceedings in 1780; but, *longo intervallo*.

It cannot be doubted that if the populace had forced their way into the House of Commons, Lord George would not have survived to recount the exploit. Many members who were there present, justly indignant at his conduct, threatened him with instant death, as soon as any of the rioters should burst open the doors. The late Earl of Carnarvon, then Mr. Henry Herbert, followed him close, with that avowed determination; and General Murray, uncle to the present Duke of Athol, a man whom I intimately knew, and who, when incensed, was capable of executing the most desperate resolution; held his sword ready to pass it through Lord George's body,

on the first irruption of the mob. It will always remain disputable, whether ambition, fanaticism, or alienation of mind, contributed most to the part which he acted, in assembling and inciting the people to acts of violence. That he was not insensible to the political consideration and importance which he obtained from his personal influence over so vast a multitude, cannot be questioned. To religious enthusiasm or conviction, something may perhaps be fairly attributed; but, more must be laid to the deranged state of his understanding, though no circumstance in his conduct or deportment, could possibly subject him to be considered as insane. He appears in fact to have been perfectly master of himself, and in possession of all his faculties, during every stage of the riots; nor is it to be imagined that he either foresaw or intended any of the outrages which were committed after the second of June. But, he had put in motion a machine, of which he could not regulate or restrain the movements: and unquestionably, the mob which set fire to London, was of a far more savage, as well as atrocious description, than the original assemblage of people who met in St. George's Fields. The late Lord Rodney, who was then an officer in the guards, told me, that having been sent on the night of the 7th of June, to the defence of the bank of England, at the head of a detachment of his regiment, he there found Lord George Gordon, who appeared anxiously endeavouring by expostulation, to induce the populace to retire. As soon as Lord George saw Captain Rodney, he strongly expressed his concern at the acts of violence committed; adding, that he was ready to take his stand by Captain Rodney's side, and to expose his person to the utmost risk, in order to resist such proceedings. Rodney, who distrusted however his sincerity, and justly considered him as the original cause of all the calamities, declined any communication with him; only exhorting him, if he wished to stop the further effusion of blood, and to prevent the destruction of the bank, to exert himself in dispersing the furious crowd. But, whatever might be his inclination, he was altogether destitute of the power. The military force alone saved the bank

from being plundered, and prevented the temporary subversion of the national credit.

I knew Lord George Gordon well, and I once accompanied him from a party where we met, in Lower Grosvenor street, at the late Lord Elcho's, to Ranelagh, in the summer of 1782, in his own coach. In his person he was thin, his features regular, and his complexion pale. His manners were gentle, his conversation agreeable, and he had the appearance as well as the deportment, of a man of quality. There was, however, something in his cast of countenance and mode of expression, that indicated cunning, or a perverted understanding, or both. His whole income consisted, I believe, in an annuity of six hundred pounds a year, paid him by the Duke of Gordon, his brother. It forms a singular subject of reflection, that after involving London during several successive days, in all the horrors of insurrection and anarchy, he should have escaped any punishment for these proceedings, which cost the lives of so many individuals, and the demolition of so many edifices; while he expiated by a rigorous imprisonment to the end of his days, in Newgate, the publication of a libel on the late unfortunate Queen of France, who, herself, perished on the scaffold. He exhibited the strongest attestation of the sincerity of his conversion to Judaism, by submitting to one of the most painful ceremonies or acts enjoined by the Mosaic law. The operation, which was performed at Birmingham, confined him to his chamber, if not to his bed, for a considerable time; and he preserved with great care the sanguinary proofs of his having undergone the amputation. Few individuals occupy a more conspicuous, or a more unfortunate place in the annals of their country, under the reign of George the Third. He will rank in history, with Wat Tyler and Jack Cade, the incendiaries of the Plantagenet times; or with Kett, so memorable under Edward the Sixth.

The elements seemed to conspire with all the foreign enemies of Great Britain, at this period; the hurricane of October, 1780, which took place in the West Indies, being one of the most tremendous in its nature, as well as violent in its

effects, commemorated in the course of the eighteenth century. Though its destructive rage spread devastation in a greater or a less degree, over the whole chain of the Caribbee Islands, yet Barbadoes experienced its greatest fury, together with the severest loss of lives and property. A friend of mine, General James Cunningham, was then governor of the colony. He has related to me, that after remaining above ground as long as it was practicable with safety, he, accompanied by a number of his family and domestics, took refuge in a small cellar, several feet lower than the level of the street, at Bridge Town, the capital of the settlement. Here, indeed, they found themselves secure from the danger of being crushed under the ruins of the house which they had just quitted, or from being completely borne off and swept away by the force of the wind. But, they were soon assailed by two new misfortunes, against which they could provide no sufficient remedy. The first inconvenience arose from the severe cold which they endured; the climate having changed, in the course of a few hours, from intense heat, to a contrary extreme. The other evil, which was of a still more alarming nature, threatened their destruction, from the rain which flowed in upon them in great quantity, as it fell in torrents. While they remained in this deplorable situation, up to the knees in water, doubtful whether to continue in the cellar, where about twenty of them huddled together, were crowded into a very narrow space; or whether to attempt reaching some more secure shelter; a tall athletic negro of General Cunningham's family, who lay upon him, in a posture which did not admit of his moving, said to the general, "Massa, if I not make water, I die." "Do it then, in God's name," answered he. The negro had no sooner received this permission, than instantly availing himself of it, he bedewed the general, from the nape of his neck, to his very shoes; much, as we are taught to believe, in the manner of a Hottentot priest, when celebrating the nuptial ceremony. "But," added Cunningham, when relating the story, "never did I experience a more grateful sensation than was produced by this warm libation, which seemed to ani-

mate my frozen frame, and to revivify my body. I regretted when it stopped, and I derived from it essential service in the horrors of that indescribable night."

The situation of the negro, impelled by a necessity paramount to all respect or restraint, reminds me of a fact somewhat similar, which took place at the palace of Sans Souci. The great Frederic, in a select society, having been one day more elevated and convivial than usual after dinner, was induced by the gaiety of the conversation, to prolong the accustomed limits of the repast, and to detain his guests to a late hour. His majesty furnished, himself, the chief share of the entertainment, by the brilliancy of his sallies; but he forgot, unfortunately, that his guests were men. One of them, an old general, who was often among the persons invited to the royal table, but whose powers of retention had suffered in the course of twelve campaigns; anticipated with extreme impatience, the moment when the king, by rising, would permit of his quitting the apartment. In this hope and expectation, he long supported with unshaken fortitude, one of the most pressing demands of nature. Overcome at length, and yielding to a power stronger than himself, he suddenly rose from his chair, and exclaiming, "*Sire, tout est grand dans votre majesté, jusqu'à la vessie même. Sire, Je me meurs,*" ran out of the room. Frederic was charmed with the ingenuity of the compliment, and laughed heartily at the general's distress, which might, however, have proved fatal to him. The celebrated astronomer Tycho Brahe's death was caused by a precisely similar act of imprudent respect.

Parliament having been dissolved early in September, I was elected one of the members for Hindon in the county of Wilts; and the new House of Commons meeting towards the end of October, the first debate turned on the choice of a speaker. Lord George Germain, not Lord North, commenced the proceedings on that evening, and performed the principal ministerial part. It was not intended by administration, that Sir Fletcher Norton, who during near eleven years, ever since the resignation of Sir John Cust in January, 1770, had filled the chair, should re-occupy it in the new

parliament. He had given umbrage during the session of 1777, both to the sovereign, and to ministers, by a memorable speech, which he addressed to the king, while standing in his official capacity, at the bar of the House of Peers. And though the admonition or exhortation that he thought proper then to use, relative to the economical expenditure of the money voted by the House of Commons, had met with the approbation of the country at large, yet it unquestionably produced his eventual exclusion from the employment of speaker. Lord North having tried the ground at St. James's, found his majesty determined upon the point. Conscious, nevertheless, that it would be highly unpopular to place his intended dismissal on such a basis; ministers availed themselves of Sir Fletcher's ill state of health, which had considerably impeded the progress of public business in the preceding session, as forming a sufficient cause for his removal. While, therefore, they passed high eulogiums on his ability and talents, they lamented that infirmities of body rendered it improper to ask of him, or to accept from him, a continuance of his public services. Sir Fletcher, however, rising in his place, and speaking from the opposition bench, while he was sustained by that powerful and numerous phalanx; endeavoured to point out the latent enmity, as well as the obvious nullity of the ministerial arguments. He affected, it is true, to disclaim any wish of being again placed in the speaker's chair; but he took care to accompany the declaration, by an assertion of his perfect physical capacity to meet its duties and fatigues. His appearance seemed indeed to present the aspect of a man, who, though somewhat declined in years, did not manifest any tokens of decay. All the personal attacks levelled by Norton's friends on the opposition side of the house, at Lord North, could neither induce nor provoke the first minister to open his lips on the occasion. He remained profoundly silent; but Mr. Rigby, unintimidated by the clamours of Sir Fletcher's adherents, after boldly avowing that he was dismissed for his political trespasses, justified his exclusion from the chair, on parliamentary or on ministerial grounds.

Cornwall was chosen speaker by a very large majority.

Sir Fletcher Norton, though perhaps justly accused, as a professional man, of preferring profit to conscientious delicacy of principle; and though denominated in the coarse satires or caricatures of that day, by the epithet of "Sir Bullface Doublefee;" yet possessed eminent parliamentary knowledge as well as legal talents. Far from suffering in his capacity of speaker, by a comparison either with his immediate predecessor or successor in that high office, he must be considered as very superior to both. The chair of the House of Commons, during the whole course of the eighteenth century, was never filled with less dignity or energy, than by Sir John Cust, whom Wilkes treats in all his letters with the most contemptuous irony, or the most mortifying insult. Cornwall possessed every physical quality requisite to ornament the place; a sonorous voice, a manly, as well as imposing figure, and a commanding deportment: but his best ministerial recommendation to the office, consisted in the connection subsisting between him and Mr. Charles Jenkinson, then secretary of war, which the marriage of the former gentleman, with the sister of the latter, had cemented. After his election, Cornwall gave little satisfaction, and had recourse to the narcotic virtues of porter, for enabling him to sustain its fatigue: an auxiliary which sometimes becoming too powerful for the principal who called in its assistance, produced inconveniences. The "*Rolliad*," alluding to the speaker's chair, as it was filled in 1784, says,

"There Cornwall sits, and ah! compelled by fate,
Must sit for ever through the long debate;
Save when compelled by nature's sovereign will,
Sometimes to empty, and sometimes to fill."
—— "Like sad Prometheus fastened to the rock,
In vain he looks for pity to the clock;
In vain the powers of strengthening porter tries,
And nods to *Bellamy* for fresh supplies."

We may here remark, as a curious fact, that Sir Fletcher's dismissal from the office of speaker, conducted him within eighteen months, to the dignity of the peerage; an elevation which he owed solely to the jealousies and rivalries that arose between Lord Rocking-

ham and Lord Shelburne, as soon as they got into power : whereas, Cornwall, his successful competitor, after presiding more than eight years in the House of Commons, died without ever entering the House of Lords. It was thus that Dunning reached that gaol, while Wallace missed it. So much does the disposition of events, which in common language we denominate fortune, regulate the affairs of men, in defiance of Juvenal's

“ Nos te,

Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, Cæloque locamus.”

I scarcely remember, during near fourteen years that I sate in different parliaments, a more personal, or a more acrimonious debate than I witnessed soon after my first entrance into the house, on the sixth of November. It took place on the address proposed to be carried up to the foot of the throne in answer to his majesty's speech. Lord George Germain again assumed the first part, and attracted towards himself all the severity of opposition ; Lord North being unavoidably compelled to absent himself, on account of indisposition. The recent nomination of Sir Hugh Palliser to the government of Greenwich Hospital, drew from Fox the most pointed, as well as violent reflections, not only on various members of the cabinet, but on the sovereign himself. Not content with declaring that “ there could be only one of the king's servants” (the Earl of Sandwich), “ so abandoned, so lost to all sensibility, or honour, as to have dared to advise such a measure ;” he added, that “ his surprise was the less excited by the fact, because it formed the characteristic of the present reign, to hunt down, to defame, and to vilify great or popular public men ; while the infamous were upheld, employed, and rewarded.” As if apprehensive that the application of these last words might be in any degree ambiguous, he subjoined, fixing his eyes on Lord George Germain, “ the recent promotion of Sir Hugh Palliser is dictated by the same spirit, which has produced the promotion of a man to one of the greatest *civil* employments, who has been publicly degraded, and

declared to be incapable of serving again in any *military* capacity, at the head of every regiment in the service. So severe, if not illiberal an allusion, which could not be misunderstood, instantly called up Lord George ; who observed that “ the aspersion which the honourable member had thought proper to throw out in the course of his speech, being obviously directed at himself ; the house might naturally expect he would notice it. I rise, therefore,” said he, “ once for all, simply to declare that whenever gentlemen descend to the meanness of personal invectives, instead of argument, and shall think proper to make me their object ; I am prepared to treat both the invectives and their author, with the contempt that they deserve.” Fox allowed this answer to pass unnoticed on that evening ; but next day, having probably felt that it could not be altogether despised, he thought proper to say, while speaking on the report of the address to the crown, that “ the noble secretary's words during the preceding debate, however personal to himself they might be, yet were so qualified, as to render it wholly unnecessary for him to take any further notice of them.” Admiral Keppel, treading in the traces of Fox, repeated, however, nearly the same accusations as had already been brought forward against the first lord of the admiralty ; whom Keppel charged with incapacity and mismanagement of the naval forces, and stigmatized as meriting universal reprobation for having recommended Palliser to his majesty, for the government of Greenwich Hospital. Such an appointment conveyed indeed indirectly a severe censure upon himself. These personalities and charges did not prevent the address from being voted by a majority of eighty-two. The exclusion of Sir Fletcher from the chair, on the first day of the session, had only been carried by sixty-nine. On so precarious a foundation did the ministers stand, even at the commencement of a new parliament ; and so weak were the foundations on which reposed Lord North's power towards the close of the year 1780, undermined as it was by an unfortunate, if not an unpopular contest. When a motion was made a few days later by Mr. Thomas Townsend, to vote the

thanks of the house to their late speaker ; after a debate of considerable length, administration could only command ninety-six votes, while opposition carried the question by a majority of forty ; having divided one hundred and thirty-six, though Lord North was present on the occasion. But the motion being conceived in very laconic and general terms, the first minister neither rose to speak, nor made any personal effort to impede its success.

A long and very interesting debate arose on the 27th of November, when Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, member for the town of Nottingham (one of the most upright, honourable, and incorruptible individuals who ever sat in parliament) ; moved the thanks of the house to Sir Henry Clinton and Earl Cornwallis, for the important services that those commanders had rendered to their country, on the other side of the Atlantic. An affinity of curious matter was elicited by the nature of the subject, as it naturally or necessarily embraced the American war: a topic calculated to produce interminable discussions. Neither the first minister, nor Mr. Fox, though both addressed the house in the course of the evening, performed the principal parts. Wilkes rising in his place, pronounced a speech of great length, and of still greater severity ; which (as he was accustomed to do) he had prepared, not without evident labour, for the occasion. It was, like every composition of his ; spirited, classic, and stamped with the characteristic energy of his fearless mind. In the course of it, he neither spared Lord Cornwallis, whose inconsistency in drawing his sword to maintain a cause, which, a few years earlier, he had reprobated publicly in the house of peers, Wilkes endeavoured to expose : nor did he fail to attack both the ministers and the sovereign, by whom the war was carried on against the colonies. Theright claimed by the crown and by parliament, to tax America, he reprobated as an " antiquated usurpation of the Stuarts, revived under the third prince of the family of Brunswick. This pretension," exclaimed he, " has been in every age, the favourite maxim of despots. In opposition to it, *Hampden* shed his blood. Such an attempt against the fundamental

rights of the English people, justified our ancestors in commencing the civil war which conducted the tyrant Charles to the scaffold. He concluded by imploring of Mr. Coke to withdraw a motion in which no man could concur, without indirectly giving his sanction or approbation to the American war itself. Lord North, on the other hand, expressed his hope that Wilkes would be the only individual in the house to oppose the motion. But another dissentient voice was raised to it in the person of Sir Joseph Mawbey ; a man who, from some unfortunate circumstances of his private life, never could obtain a patient or a candid hearing in parliament. Rigby and Courtenay, both attacked him ; not, indeed, with argument, but with a more powerful weapon, ridicule. Sheridan and Fox rose to defend Sir Joseph, as he constantly voted with opposition. In 1784, after he had quitted that party, and joined Pitt against " the coalition," they turned their powerful artillery upon him. 'The " *Rolliad*," when speaking of the necessity imposed on the speaker, *Cornwall*, to continue in the chair while the house is sitting, adds,

" Painful pre-eminence !—He hears, 'tis true,
Fox, North, and Burke : but hears *Sir Joseph*
too."

Lines which form a parody on Pope's address to Lord Bolingbroke, which he concludes by saying,

" Painful pre-eminence ! ourselves to view,
Above life's weakness and its comforts too !"

Sir Joseph Mawbey spoke nevertheless with great good sense, though not with brilliancy. He was at this time the colleague of Admiral Keppel and represented the county of Surry. To the Marquis of Rockingham, during the short administration of that nobleman, in 1765, he owed his elevation to the rank of a baronet. Like Wilkes, he refused to concur in the vote of thanks to Lord Cornwallis ; but the motion was not the less finally carried without a division.

Little consolation can be derived during this gloomy period of English history, from carrying our view beyond the metropolis, to the extremities of the em-

pire, or from considering the operations of the war by sea and land. As Geary had succeeded to the command of the channel fleet by Hardy's death, so Darby took the same command soon afterwards, in consequence of Geary's resignation. None of these names will be pronounced with enthusiasm by posterity. Admiral Barrington, by his repulse of D'Estaing at St. Lucie, acquired the only renown gained on the ocean, from the commencement of hostilities in July, 1778, till the period when Rodney was sent out to the West Indies. The inveterate disputes that arose between Keppel and Palliser, which, after convulsing the navy and dividing the kingdom, began insensibly to fall into oblivion; were again revived during the short time that the House of Commons remained sitting before the Christmas recess. In consequence of Sir Hugh Palliser's appointment to the government of Greenwich Hospital, the events of the 27th July, 1778, were discussed anew, with all the acrimony of party. Fox originated the discussion by the severity of his animadversions on Palliser, who had just taken his seat in the house, as member for the town of Huntingdon, where Lord Sandwich's interest had procured his election. The Earl of Lisburne, second lord of the board of admiralty, having, in a committee of supply, laid the navy estimates on the table, an animated and most personal debate ensued. Lord Nugent, who was then well advanced towards fourscore, vainly attempted (like Nestor in the "Iliad"), by calling Fox repeatedly to order, to avert the storm, and to give the subject under consideration, a more general direction. When Fox had exhausted every topic of declamation, with which the occasion furnished him, both against Palliser, and against the first lord of the admiralty. Lord North rose to protect them; and in a very able, as well as argumentative speech, endeavoured to show how unjust a persecution the vice-admiral had undergone. Sir Hugh himself, conscious of his inability to contend with such an adversary as Fox, on such a theatre as parliament; after denying the pretended allegations made by his enemies, and acknowledging his obligations to the

first minister for the eloquent defence just pronounced; proceeded to read his own justification. The paper, by its length, dulness, and perhaps more than either, by the imperfect or defective manner of its delivery, put the patience of his auditors, as I well remember, to a severe trial. Palliser, who had risen from an obscure origin, by long and distinguished services, to the rank of a baronet, and to some of the highest honours of his profession; wanted the advantages of education, as well as those of manner, deportment, and external grace, in all which he was wholly deficient. Nor had he, like his opponent, Keppel, the support derived from high descent and alliances. I have, however, always considered him as a most judicious, meritorious, and calumniated naval officer, who was overborne by the torrent of party, and fell a sacrifice to ministerial unpopularity. Never can I forget the picture that he drew of the action fought on the 27th of July; a day not to be recollected by an Englishman without feelings allied to humiliation. He declared in the face of the House of Commons, that the British fleet were led into action in a disorderly and unskilful manner. In the beginning, with too much contempt of the enemy, but towards its close, with too much awe; keeping at too great a distance, and manœuvring in confusion. In his reply to Palliser, Keppel contented himself with entrenching his reputation behind the sentences of the two courts martial; and reiterating the charges of treachery, blended with falsehood, which his honourable relation (Fox), had already brought forward against the first lord of the admiralty. Not that Keppel's courage could be called in question, as had happened, perhaps most unjustly, in the instance of Byng: but in self-possession, judgment, superior maritime skill, and presence of mind; in all those endowments of a great commander which ensure victory, I have always regarded him as deficient. Even the state of his health, disordered and shattered by sickness, tended to incapacitate him on the twenty-seventh of July, for performing with promptitude, the arduous duties of his situation. I believe, now that time has softened down the asperities of party,

this opinion has become general. Képél's exploits will never be ranked with those of Rodney, of Duncan, or of Nelson; nor will they ever be associated to the glorious recollections of the best years of George the Third. Lord North, with whom, not to be defeated, constituted a sort of victory; and who generally contented himself with half triumphs; after defending Palliser with his usual ability, and with more than his common animation; having thus rescued him from the immediate attack of his enemies, aimed at no further advantage, but moved for an adjournment early in December.

As if to complete the climax of our national misfortunes at this humiliating period, Holland was added to the number of our enemies; war being declared against the Seven United Provinces, before the close of 1780, notwithstanding the repugnance equally felt at such a rupture, by the King of Great Britain, and by the stadtholder. More than a century had then elapsed, since we had been engaged in hostilities with the Dutch, under the profligate reign of Charles the Second. During some portion of the intermediate time, the two countries had been governed by one prince; and one soul might be said to animate their counsels after the expulsion of James the Second; when their joint efforts were directed to stem the current of Louis the Fourteenth's arms in the Netherlands. Even subsequent to King William's decease, the United Provinces made common cause with his successor, against France, under Marlborough: but the disgraceful termination of that great struggle, which lasted near ten years, dissevered England and Holland. After the peace of Utrecht, in 1712, no close nor cordial union subsisted between the cabinets of the Hague and of St. James's. The Dutch were, indeed, prevailed on to join George the Second, as auxiliaries, though not as principals, in the war of 1743, undertaken to preserve Maria Theresa on the throne of her father Charles the Sixth. Unfortunately, the English, Dutch, and Austrian armies, which, while conducted by the great talents of Eugene and Marlborough, had nearly driven Louis the Fourteenth to the last

extremities; when led by Königseck, and by William, Duke of Cumberland, were everywhere defeated on the same plains.

Marshal Saxe made himself master of the barrier that protected Holland against the overwhelming power of France; and only the moderation or the indolence of Louis the Fifteenth, which checked his conquests, gave peace to Europe in 1748 at Aix-la-Chapelle. — That prince, had he been animated by the ambition of his predecessor, or by the spirit of conquest which impelled the French republic in 1795, might have entered Amsterdam, and have subjected the Zuyder sea to his dominion. Having escaped from this imminent peril, the Dutch remained neutral spectators of the contest which took place between us and France in 1756, when Flanders, which for near a century had constituted the palæstra of Europe, by a singular transition became a country of repose; and the House of Austria for the first time joined her inveterate foe, the House of Bourbon. It was reserved for the calamitous æra of the American war, which familiarized us with disgraces and reverses, to witness Holland openly ranged against Great Britain under the banners of Louis the Sixteenth and Charles the Third. The opposition exulted at the declaration of hostilities between the two countries, as setting the seal to Lord North's ministerial embarrassments. Nor could it be denied, that the necessity for blocking the mouth of the Texel, and probably engaging the Dutch fleet at the entrance of their own ports, in the depressed, as well as inferior state to which the British navy had then sunk; augmented the difficulties under which the administration laboured, while it increased the unpopularity of the sovereign.

Yet never did any government make greater efforts to avert and avoid a rupture, than were exerted by Lord North's cabinet. Sir Joseph Yorke, who, by long residence in Holland, had become in some measure naturalized at the Hague, exhausted every art of diplomacy, to stem the current of French and American politics. The stadtholder, no less than the majority of the people throughout the Seven United Provinces,

nourished the warmest partiality towards Great Britain : but the Prince of Orange had lost the public respect which his high office ought to have excited ; and the nation, immersed in narrow speculations of commercial advantage, displayed no spark of that public spirit, or of those great energies, which had operated such powerful effects against Philip the Second and Third, Kings of Spain, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The pensionary, Van Berkel, acting under the impulse of Maurepas and of Vergennes, precipitated his countrymen on war with England, by signing a treaty with the American insurgents ; precisely as Madison, in the summer of 1812, commenced hostilities with us, by the suggestions of his Corsican director. Nor did Fox and Burke arraign more severely the measures of Lord North, as having produced the rupture that took place with Holland ; than the leaders of opposition in the House of Commons, inveighed against the line of conduct adopted on the part of ministers, which led to the late contest with America. Both wars arose principally from a similar cause ; the apparently desperate, or highly alarming condition of England. In 1780, we appeared to be rapidly sinking under the combination of European, Asiatic, and American foes. In 1812, Bonaparte, master of the continent, from the frontiers of Portugal to those of Russia, prepared to consummate the subjugation of Europe, by a march to Moscow. To Van Berkel, and to Madison, the occasion seemed equally favourable for the development of their rancorous enmity to the English government. The measures of the former minister led, at no distant period of time, in the space of about fifteen years, to the subjugation and subversion of the republic of Holland. Futurity will show whether the policy of Madison, if his base subservience to Bonaparte can merit the name, will prove more successful or beneficial to his countrymen ; and will prove how far the American President may justly challenge their future gratitude, more than the pensionary of Amsterdam merited the support of the Dutch.

Nearly about the same time, Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, expired at Vienna, after a reign of

forty years, during which she had exhibited a memorable instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. Like Frederic the Second, King of Prussia, she acceded in 1740 ; and a great portion of their lives was passed in mutual hostility. The strength of her mind, and the tenacity of her character, sustained her amidst difficulties, which a woman of inferior resolution could not have surmounted. Since the death of Elizabeth, Queen of England, in 1603, Europe had not beheld any female seated on the throne, who united so many private virtues, to so many great public endowments. Maria Theresa manifested a masculine mind, blended with feminine qualities calculated to conciliate universal affection. Elizabeth, however illustrious she appears when viewed in her kingly capacity, wanted softness, sincerity, and all the gentler qualifications that render woman an object of attachment. Henry the Seventh and Henry the Eighth were both resuscitated in her, though without the avarice of her grandfather, or the capricious and cruel despotism of her father. Maria Theresa resembled her in this point of view. As a sovereign, she possessed far greater constancy and energy than had been exhibited by her father, the Emperor Charles the Sixth, or by her grandfather, Leopold the First. Charles, while resident in Spain during "the War of the Succession," displayed no endowments of character, and was twice driven out of Madrid in consequence of his delays or incapacity. Leopold betrayed a want of every resource, when in 1683, at the approach of the grand vizier Cara Mustapha, he fled to Passau, leaving his capital to be invested, and his dominions to be ravaged, by the Turks. The caution, experience, and moderation of Maria Theresa, increased by religious scruples, imposed a restraint on the pernicious activity of her son and successor, Joseph the Second. His accession to the dominions of the House of Austria, and the line of policy that he embraced, constituted one of the many concurring circumstances which eventually facilitated the progress of the French arms in the Netherlands, after the revolution.

Though sinking under the accumulated pressure of advancing age, as well as of

disease and infirmity, Maria Theresa retained the possession of all her faculties, nearly to the last moments of her life. Religion and resignation smoothed its close. Two of the archduchesses, her daughters, Maria and Elizabeth, who remained unmarried, constantly attended about her bed; but I have been assured that they could not prevail on their mother, though they earnestly entreated it, even a short time preceding her dissolution, to bequeath her blessing to the Archduchess Amelia, their sister. That princess, who had been married to Don Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, was supposed to have committed great irregularities of every kind. Only a short time before Maria Theresa breathed her last, having apparently fallen into a sort of insensibility, and her eyes being closed; one of the ladies near her person, in reply to an enquiry made respecting the state of the empress, answered that her majesty seemed to be asleep. "No," replied she, "I could sleep, if I would indulge repose; but I am sensible of the near approach of death, and I will not allow myself to be surprised by him in my sleep. I wish to meet my dissolution awake." There is nothing transmitted to us by antiquity, more impressive than this answer, which appears divested of all ostentation. Voltaire him-

self, cynic as he was, and always severe upon crowned heads, unless when mollified by the flattering letters or presents of Catherine the Second, must have admired it. Even the great Frederic, who survived Maria Theresa near six years; though he encountered the gradual advances of death with philosophy and fortitude, yet betrayed much reluctance, displayed some peevishness, and perhaps manifested a little affectation or vanity, in the preparations which he made for his departure. We may see the proofs of it, in his conversations with Zimmerman. Neither Augustus, nor Vespasian, nor Adrian, though each of these emperors seems to have contemplated death with a steady countenance, and almost with a smiling look; yet manifested more perfect self-possession in the last act of life, than did Maria Theresa. She was as much superior in virtue to her contemporary, Catherine the Second, as she fell beneath that princess in brilliancy of talents. In the arts of reigning, in courage, in benignity of disposition, and in solid endowments of understanding, the Austrian may dispute for superiority even with the Russian czarina. Posterity will perhaps confer more admiration on the latter empress, but, must reserve its moral approbation and esteem for the former sovereign.

PART THE SECOND.

January, 1781.—I am now arrived, in the course of these memoirs, at the beginning of the year 1781. Before, however, we enter on the political events of that disastrous period, it seems indispensable that we should survey the character of the sovereign, of the cabinet ministers, of the leaders of opposition, and the principal persons in both houses of the new parliament. Great Britain did not then present the same august, majestic, and interesting spectacle to mankind, which we have since exhibited, even during the most calamitous moments of the late revolutionary war. The empire, under Lord North's administration, was shaken and convulsed in almost

every quarter. Domestic faction pervaded all the departments of government, infected the navy, and manifested itself in every debate of either House of Parliament. The English were discontented; the Scots were sullen; and the Irish had become clamorous for political, as well as for commercial emancipation. A ministry, the members of which body did not always act in union, and still prosecuting a hopeless contest with America; whatever ability the individuals composing it might separately possess, yet inspired no public confidence in the success of their future measures. National credit began to droop under the expenses of a war carried on across the

Atlantic, at an immense distance ; while the commerce of the country suffered at least in an equal degree from the depredations of the enemy. Nor had Lord North provided, as Mr. Pitt afterwards did in 1786, any *sinking fund* for the gradual extinction of the taxes which he annually imposed.

Amidst this scene of distress, the great continental powers of the north and east of Europe, looked on, either as unconcerned spectators, or as secret enemies. Joseph the Second, Emperor of Germany, who had recently succeeded to the Bohemian and Hungarian thrones ; imitating in this instance his mother's line of policy, and occupied with domestic reforms of various kinds, took indeed no open part. But, connected as he was with France, by his sister's marriage to Louis the Sixteenth, his inclinations might be supposed to lean towards the House of Bourbon. The great Frederic, sinking in years, as well as under the pressure of diseases and infirmities ; satiated with military fame ; attentive principally to the improvement of his dominions, and the augmentation of his revenue ; always attached from disposition, to the manners, language and crown of France ; beheld with satisfaction the augmenting difficulties of the English government. He had never forgiven Lord Bute for retaining, when first minister, the subsidy claimed by Prussia in 1762 ; and he nourished a dislike to the country, which, as he perhaps justly conceived, had broken its faith with him on so important a point. Catherine the Second, ever anxious to throw a veil of glory over the tragical circumstances which placed her on the Russian throne, by aggrandizing the Russian empire ; and availing herself with ability of the distress of England, then contending against so many adversaries ; set up pretensions to a maritime exemption from the right of search on the high seas, claimed and exercised by Great Britain in time of war. Placing herself at the head of the Baltic powers, in union with the courts of Copenhagen and Stockholm, which on this occasion made common cause with her, she attempted to enslave their navies from any further submission to the British flag. Lord North, unable to resent, or to oppose the policy

of Catherine by open force, temporized, and waited for more propitious times. Portugal alone, amidst the general hostility or defection of Europe, ventured to manifest her amicable disposition ; and had the generosity to refuse to form a junction with the Baltic confederacy, or to accede to the armed neutrality of the northern states.

The king at this period of his reign, was far advanced in his forty-third year. Though he came into the world at the term of seven months ; a fact which is indisputable, as the late Duchess of Brunswic, his sister's birth, took place on the 11th of August, 1737 ; and that of his majesty, on the 4th of June, 1738 ; yet nature had conferred on him a sound and vigorous frame of body. He was born in Norfolk House, St. James's square, where Frederic, Prince of Wales, then resided ; who had been peremptorily ordered only a short time before, to quit St. James's palace, by George the Second. I saw, not much more than a year ago, the identical bed in which the Princess of Wales was delivered, now removed to the Duke of Norfolk's seat of Worksop, in the county of Nottingham ; and it forcibly proves the rapid progress of domestic elegance and taste within the last eighty years. Except that the furniture is of green silk, the bed has nothing splendid about it ; and would hardly be esteemed fit for the accommodation of a person of ordinary condition in the present times. A course of systematic abstinence and exercise, had secured to George the Third the enjoyment of almost uninterrupted health, down to the time of which I speak. So little had he been incommoded by sickness, or by indisposition of any kind, from the period of his accession, till his memorable seizure in 1788 ; that scarcely was he ever compelled to absent himself on that account, from a levee, a council, a drawing-room, during eight and twenty years. One only exception to this remark occurred in the autumn of 1765, when he was attacked by a disorder that confined him for several weeks ; relative to the nature and seat of which malady, though many conjectures and assertions have been hazarded, in conversation, and even in print, no satisfactory information has ever been given to the world.

In the king's countenance, a physiognomist would have distinguished two principal characteristics; firmness, or as his enemies denominated it, obstinacy; tempered with benignity. The former expression was however indisputably more marked and prominent than the latter sentiment. Fox, when addressing the House of Commons, did not hesitate to allude in very intelligible language to his obstinacy. I remember, in January, 1782, on his moving for papers, in order to institute an inquiry into Lord Sandwich's conduct at the head of the admiralty, Fox observed, "It is said by the very members of this assembly who in case of a division will vote in favour of the Earl of Sandwich, that there is *an obstinacy somewhere*, which will oppose whatever measure is suggested from this side of the house."

—"I cannot pretend to say whether such a *spirit of obstinacy* does, or does not exist: but, those men who really believe the present first lord of the admiralty unfit for his situation, and yet come down to vote for maintaining him in office, are unfit for the important trust of representatives of a free people." I believe, there was no person present, so obtuse, as not to understand the application to Fox's expressions. The king seemed to have a tendency to become corpulent, if he had not repressed it by habitual and unremitting temperance. On this subject I shall relate a fact, which was communicated to me by a friend, Sir John Macpherson, who received it from the great Earl of Mansfield, to whom the king himself mentioned it; forcibly demonstrating that strength of mind, renunciation of all excess, and dominion over his appetites, which have characterised George the Third at every period of his life. Conversing with William, Duke of Cumberland, his uncle, not long before that prince's death, in 1764, his majesty observed, that it was with concern he remarked the duke's augmenting corpulency. "I lament it not less, sir," replied he, "but it is constitutional; and I am much mistaken if your majesty will not become as large as myself, before you attain to my age." It arises from your not using sufficient exercise," answered the king. "I use, neverthe-

less," said the duke, "constant and severe exercise of every kind. But, there is another effort requisite, in order to repress this tendency, which is much more difficult to practise; and without which, no exercise, however violent, will suffice. I mean great renunciation and temperance. Nothing else can prevent your majesty from growing to my size." The king made little reply; but the duke's words sunk deep, and produced a lasting impression on his mind. From that day he formed the resolution, as he assured Lord Mansfield, of checking his constitutional inclination to corpulency, by unremitting restraint upon his appetite; a determination which he carried into complete effect, in defiance of every temptation.

Perhaps no sovereign, of whom history, ancient or modern, makes mention in any age of the earth, has exceeded him in the practice of this virtue. It is a fact, that during many years of his life, after coming up from Kew, or from Windsor, often on horseback, and sometimes in heavy rain, to the queen's house; he has gone in a sedan chair to St. James's, dressed himself, held a levee, passed through all the forms of that long and tedious ceremony; for such it was in the way that he performed it; without leaving any individual in the circle, unnoticed: and has afterwards assisted at a privy council, or given audience to his cabinet ministers and others, till five, and even sometimes till six o'clock. After so much fatigue of body and of mind, the only refreshment or sustenance that he usually took, consisted in a few slices of bread and butter and a dish of tea, which he sometimes swallowed as he walked up and down, previous to getting into his carriage, in order to return into the country. His undertaking, solid and sedate, qualified him admirably for business, thought it was neither of a brilliant, lively, nor imposing description. But his manner did injustice to the endowments of his intellect: and unfortunately, it was in public that these minute personal defects or imperfections became most conspicuous. Dr. Johnson, indeed, thought otherwise on the subject: for, after the conversation with which his majesty was pleased to honour

that great literary character, in the library at the queen's house, in February, 1767, he passed the highest ecomiums on the elegant manners of the sovereign. Boswell, in Johnson's Life, speaking of this circumstance, adds, "He said to Mr. Barnard, the librarian, 'Sir, they may talk of the king as they will, but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen.' And he afterwards observed to Mr. Langton, 'Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman, as we may suppose Louis the Fourteenth, or Charles the Second.'"

Independent of the effect necessarily produced on Johnson's mind, by so unexpected and flattering a mark of royal condescension, which may well be imagined to have operated most favourably on the opinions of the moralist; he was perhaps of all men the least capable of estimating personal elegance of deportment. His vast intellectual powers lay in another line of discrimination. Had Johnson been now living, he might indeed witness the finest model of grace, dignity, ease, and affability, which the world has ever beheld, united in the same person. In *him* are really blended the majesty of Louis the Fourteenth, with the amenity of Charles the Second. But George the Third was altogether destitute of these ornamental and adventitious endowments. The oscillations of his body, the precipitation of his questions, none of which, it was said, would wait for an answer; and the hurry of his articulation, afforded on the contrary, to little minds, or to malicious observers, who only saw him at the drawing-room (or, as the Duchess of Chandos called it, the *drawing*-room), occasion for calling in question the soundness of his judgment, and the strength of his faculties. None of his ministers, however, and Mr. Fox, if possible, less than any other, entertained such an opinion. His whole reign forms indeed, the best answer to the imputation. That he committed many errors, nourished many prejudices, formed many erroneous estimates, and frequently adhered too pertinaciously to his determinations, where he conceived, perhaps falsely, that they were founded in reason, or in justice; — all these allegations may be admitted. Nor can the injurious effects to himself,

and to his people, necessarily flowing in various instances, from such defects of character, and of administration, be altogether denied. But, these infirmities, from which no man is exempt, cannot impugn his right to the affectionate veneration of posterity, for the inflexible uprightness of his public conduct. And as little can they deprive him of the suffrages of the wise and good of every age, who will bear testimony to the expansion of his mind, and the invariable rectitude of his intentions.

It would, indeed, be difficult for history to produce an instance of any prince who has united and displayed on the throne, during near half a century, so many personal and private virtues. In the flower of youth unmarried, endowed with a vigorous constitution, and surrounded with temptations to pleasure or indulgence of every kind when he succeeded to the crown, he never yielded to these seductions. Not less affectionately attached to the queen, than Charles the First was to his consort, Henrietta Maria, he remained nevertheless altogether exempt from the uxoriousness which characterised his unfortunate predecessor, and which operated so fatally in the course of his reign.

Wilkes, in the papers of the "North Briton," and "Junius," always affected, by drawing comparisons between the two kings, to demonstrate the moral resemblance that existed between them: but the pretended similarity was only external, in matters of mere deportment, not of solid character. It must be apparent to every impartial person, who studies their respective reigns and line of political action, how superior was George the Third to Charles, on the three great points that constitute the essential difference between men. The first of these qualities was *firminess of mind*. To his weakness, not even to give it a more severe epithet, in abandoning Lord Strafford to the rage of his enemies, we may trace all the misfortunes that accompanied Charles from that time down to the close of life: misfortunes, aggravated by the reproaches of his own conscience, for delivering up his minister a victim to popular violence! His present majesty neither deserted Lord Bute, when most unpopular, in

1763 ; nor the Duke of Grafton, amidst the tumults of March, 1769 ; nor Lord North in the more awful riots of June, 1780. As little did he turn his back on Lord George Germain, after the defeats of Saratoga, or of Yorktown, amidst the disasters of the American war. Far from recurring for support to his ministers he constantly extended it to them ; and never shrunk from personal risk, responsibility, or odium. His conduct on the memorable seventh of June, 1780, both at the council table, and during the course of that calamitous night which followed, will best exemplify the assertion. Charles, though personally brave in the field, and perfectly composed on the scaffold, was deficient in political courage, steadiness of temper, and tenacity of determination. These qualities formed the distinguishing characteristics of George the Third, who seems, when assailed by misfortunes, to have taken as his motto, the sentiment of the Roman poet :

“ Tu ne cede malis ; sed contra, audentior ito.”

Nor does the balance incline less in his favour when compared with his predecessor of the Stuart line, on the article of *judgment*. If any act of his present majesty's reign or government may seem to bear an analogy to the intemperate, vindictive, and pernicious attempt of Charles, to seize on the five members of the House of Commons ; it was the order issued by a *general warrant*, to take Wilkes into custody. Nor shall I undertake the defence of that proceeding, which I have always considered as the least justifiable measure, in every sense, embraced since the king's accession to the throne. But, when he authorized it, in April, 1763, he had not completed his twenty-fifth year. Charles the First was above forty, at the time of his committing the rash act in question. That George the Third, if he had ever been reduced to take up arms against his subjects, might, from the partialities of parental affection, have committed an error similar to that of Charles when he entrusted the command of his forces to Prince Rupert ; I will even admit to be probable, reasoning from the internal evidence afforded by the campaigns of

1793, 1794, and 1799. But, no man who has followed the whole chain of events from 1760 down to 1810, can hesitate in pronouncing, that under circumstances the most appalling to the human mind, demanding equal fortitude and intellectual resources ; he has displayed a degree of ability that we would vainly seek in the Stuart king's unfortunate administration, terminated by the scaffold.

It is, however, in *moral principle and good faith*, that the superiority of the one sovereign over the other becomes most irresistible, and forces the completest conviction. “ Charles the First,” says *Junius*, “ lived and died a hypocrite.” However severe we may esteem this sentence, we cannot contest that his insincerity formed a prominent feature of his character, and eminently conduced to his destruction. It was proved by a variety of facts ; and it unquestionably deterred Cromwell, as well as others of the republican leaders, from exhibiting or anticipating the conduct of *Monk*. Unable to trust his most solemn assurances, they found no security for themselves, except in bringing him to the block. But George the Third exhibited a model of unshaken fidelity to his engagements ; even those most repugnant to his own feelings, and most contrary to his own judgment. I could adduce many proofs of the fact. How magnanimous was his reception and treatment of Adams, in 1783 ; a man personally obnoxious ; when presented to him at his levee, as envoy from the American States ! In terms the most conciliating, yet nobly frank, he avowed to that minister with what reluctance he had consented to the separation of the transatlantic British colonies from his dominion : “ But,” added he, “ their independence being now consummated, I shall be the last man in my kingdom to encourage its violation.”

He acted in a similar manner, when the preliminaries of peace were signed in 1801, with France. No measure of state in the power of ministers to adopt, could have been, under the existing circumstances, less consonant to *his* ideas of safety, policy, and wisdom : a fact of which the cabinet was so perfectly aware, that Lord Hawkesbury affixed his signa-

ture to the articles, not only without the king's consent or approbation, but without his knowledge. It took place, as is well known, on the first of October, just as he was about to return from Weymouth to Windsor. The cabinet instantly sent off a messenger with the intelligence, who met the king at Andover; and the packet was brought to him as he stood in the drawing-room of the inn, engaged in conversation with the late Earl of Cardigan, and two other noblemen, one of whom is still alive. His majesty, wholly unsuspecting of the fact, and not expecting to receive any news of importance, ordered them not to leave the apartment, as they were preparing to do, in order that he might have time to peruse the despatch. But, on inspecting its contents, he betrayed so much surprise, both in his looks and gesture, that they were again about to quit his presence. The king then addressed them, and holding the letter open in his hand, "I have received surprising news," said he, "but it is no secret. Preliminaries of peace are signed with France. I knew nothing of it whatever; but, since it is made, I sincerely wish it may prove a lasting peace."

Louis the Twelfth, King of France, surnamed in history, "the Father of his People," is said to have observed, that "if good faith were banished from among men, it should be found in the bosoms of princes." This sublime maxim or sentiment, seems to have been inherent in the intellectual formation of George the Third. His coronation oath was ever present to his mind; and he dreaded the slightest infraction of that solemn compact made with his people, to which the Deity had been invoked as a party, far more than the loss of his crown or life. When Mr. Pitt, sustained by four of the cabinet ministers, made the experiment of forcing him to violate it, on the 29th of January, 1801, relative to the question of "Catholic Emancipation in Ireland;" they unquestionably did not expect nor intend to go out of office, though they sent in their respective resignations. But, having compelled the king no less than four times, in the course of a few years, to give way on points where the majority of his cabinet differed from him;

they erroneously assumed that he would act in the same manner, where his conscience was concerned. Sustained however by his principles, he did not hesitate a moment in accepting their resignation, though he accompanied the acceptance with the most flattering testimonies under his hand, of esteem and personal attachment. Uninstructed by such a warning, Lord Grenville, who had been one of the five cabinet members alluded to above, aided by Lord Grey, repeated the attempt six years later, after Fox's decease, with similar success. Charles the First did not manifest the same religious respect for the sanctity of his oaths and engagements. If his enemies in parliament, and in the field, would have reposed the unlimited confidence in him, which George the Third challenged from his opponents, that unhappy prince might have died in his bed at Whitehall.

I will subjoin only one anecdote more, on a point so interesting, which vitally characterises the present king. Towards the end of the month of January, 1805, at a time when he was much occupied in preparations for the installation of the Knights of the *Gar*ter, destined to take place on the approaching twenty-third of April; and while conversing on the subject with some persons of high rank, at Windsor; one of them, the late Earl of Chesterfield, a nobleman much distinguished by his favour, said, "Sir, are not the new knights, now meant to be installed, obliged to take the sacrament before the ceremony?" Nothing could probably have been further from his idea or intention, than to have asked the question in a manner capable of implying any levity or irreverence. Nevertheless, his majesty instantly changed countenance; and assuming a severe look, after a moment or two of pause, "No," replied he, "that religious institution is not to be mixed with our profane ceremonies. Even at the time of my coronation, I was very unwilling to take the sacrament. But, when they told me that it was indispensable, and that I must receive it; before I approached the communion table, I took off the bauble from my head. The sacrament, my lord, is not to be profaned by our Gothic institutions." The severity of the king's man-

ner while he pronounced these words, impressed all present, and suspended for a short time, the conversation. Never was any prince more religiously tenacious of his engagements or promises. Even the temporary privation of his intellect, did not affect his regard to the assurances that he had given previous to such alienation of mind; nor, which is still more wonderful, obliterate them from his recollection. I know, though I shall not particularise the facts, that on his recovery from the severest visitations under which he has laboured, he has said to his minister, in the first moments of his convalescence; "previous to my attack of illness, I made such and such promises; they must be effectuated." How deep a sense of honour, and how strong a moral principle, must have animated such a prince!

The education of George the Third had not been conducted or superintended, in many respects, with as much care as his birth, and the great prospects to which he was heir, should seem to have claimed from his predecessor. He was only between twelve and thirteen years of age, when he lost his father; and the late king did not extend any very enlightened or affectionate attention to that important national object. — Even his mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales, appears to have been deeply sensible to the inefficiency of the various preceptors successively employed about her son. Other charges, of a still more serious nature, were preferred against some of the individuals entrusted with the formation of his principles, or who had constant access to him; as if they endeavoured to imbue him with arbitrary notions, and to put into his hands authors known to have inculcated tyrannical maxims of government. These accusations, destitute of proof and denied in the most peremptory manner at the time when they were made in 1752 or 1753, by the princess dowager, rest on no solid foundations. If we wish to contemplate a portrait of the young Prince of Wales at seventeen years of age, drawn by his own mother in August, 1755, and communicated confidentially to a friend, we have it in Dodington's "Diary." She said, that "he was shy and backward; not a wild, dissipated

boy, but good-natured and cheerful, with a serious cast upon the whole: that those about him knew him no more than if they had never seen him. That he was not quick; but with those he was acquainted, applicable and intelligent. His education had given her much pain. His book-learning she was no judge of, though she supposed it small or useless: but, she hoped he might have been instructed in the general understanding of things." It is impossible to doubt the accuracy and fidelity of this picture, many features of which continued indelible throughout his whole reign.

In modern history he was tolerably well instructed; particularly in the annals of England and of France, as well as of Germany, but in classical knowledge, and all the compositions of antiquity, either of Greece or of Rome, historical as well as poetic, he was little conversant. So slight or imperfect was his acquaintance with Latin, that at forty, it may be doubted if he could have construed a page of Cicero, or of Ovid. He never delighted indeed in those branches of study, nor ever passed much of his time in sedentary occupations calculated to improve his mind, after his accession to the crown. A newspaper, which he commonly took up after dinner, and over which, however interesting its contents might be, he usually fell asleep in less than half an hour, constituted the ordinary extent of his application. Nor ought we to wonder at this circumstance, if we consider how numerous were his avocations; and how little leisure the necessary perusal of public papers, despatches, and letters, could have left him for literary research. If, however, he did not possess a very cultivated understanding, he might nevertheless be justly considered as not deficient in accomplishments befitting his high station. He conversed with almost equal fluency, as all those persons who frequented the levee or the drawing-room could attest, in the English, French, and German languages; nor was he ignorant of Italian. He wrote with brevity, perspicuity, and facility. I have had opportunities to see or hear various of his confidential notes, addressed during the period of the American war, to a nobleman high in office, some of which were written under very

delicate circumstances. In all of them, good sense, firmness, principle, consistency, and self-possession, were strongly marked through every line. In mechanics of all kinds, he delighted and indulged himself; a relaxation which seems, somewhat unjustly, to have excited much animadversion, and still more ridicule. But, it cannot be denied, that during this period of his present majesty's reign, and down to a later stage of it, the English people, — for I will not say the Scotch — viewed all the failings of their sovereign with a microscopic eye, while they did injustice to his numerous excellencies. They have, however, made him full amends since 1783, for their preceding severity.

For painting and architecture he showed a taste, the more admired, as his two immediate predecessors on the throne, altogether destitute of such a quality, extended neither favour nor protection to polite letters. Since Charles the First, no prince had extended such sums in the purchase of the productions of art, or so liberally patronized artists of every kind. Music always constituted one of his favourite recreations: and with the predilection natural to a German, he manifested great partiality for the compositions of Handel. Towards this time of his life he began likewise to take a pleasure in hunting, for which diversion he had not betrayed in his youth, so much inclination. But, another occupation of passion, which, from its beneficial tendency and results as well as from the tranquil enjoyments annexed to it, might seem peculiarly analogous to his character and disposition, employed much of his thoughts, and no inconsiderable portion of his leisure. I mean, farming and agricultural pursuits. He may be said to have shown the way, and to have set the example, which has been since imitated by the late Duke of Bedford, Mr. Coke, Lord Somerville, Sir John Sinclair and so many other distinguished persons. Even this inclination, however productive of public benefit, and laudable in all its results, yet exposed him to satirical reflections, which malignity or party spirit embodied in the form of caricatures.

Satisfied with the legitimate power entrusted to him by the British constitution, and deeply impressed with the

sanctity, as well as inviolability of the oaths administered to him at his coronation, George the Third did not desire to pass the limits of his rightful prerogative. "The king," said Lord North frequently, "would live on bread and water, to preserve the constitution of this country. He would sacrifice his life to maintain it inviolate." I know that such was his opinion of his sovereign, and Lord North could not err in forming a judgment on the point. — But, equally tenacious of his just pretensions, and firm in resisting popular violence or innovation, he never receded from any point, or abandoned any measure, under the impulse of personal apprehension. His courage was calm, temperate, and steady. It was constitutional, and hereditary; but, it was always sustained by conviction, sense of public duty, and religion. These sentiments inspired, accompanied, and upheld him, in the most distressing moments of his reign. Though he had not, like George the First, commanded armies, and made campaigns, in Hungary, or on the Rhine; nor had he proved his valour in the field, like George the Second who fought at Oudenarde in his youth, and at Dettingen in his age; yet he possessed no less bravery than his ancestors: while he joined to personal steadiness, a quality still more rare, political resolution. After the attempt made to assassinate him in 1787, by Margaret Nicholson; an attempt which only failed from the knife being worn so thin about the middle of the blade, that it bent with the resistance of the king's waistcoat, instead of entering his body, as it would otherwise have done; he immediately held his levee with the most perfect composure. No person who was present on that day at St. James's, could have supposed that he had just escaped from so imminent a danger.

On the 29th of October, 1795, when the pebble was thrown or discharged into the stage coach, in which he was proceeding to Westminster, to open the session of parliament; while surrounded by a most ferocious mob, who manifested a truly jacobinical spirit; he exhibited a calmness and self-possession prepared for every event. Few of his subjects would have shown the presence

of mind, and attention to every thing except himself, which pervaded his whole conduct on the evening of the 15th of May, 1800, at the time that Hadfield discharged a pistol over his head in the theatre, loaded with two slugs. His whole anxiety was directed towards the queen, who not having entered the box, might, he apprehended, on hearing of the event, be overcome by her surprise or emotions. The dramatic piece, which was about to be represented, commenced in a short space of time afterwards, precisely as if no accident had interrupted its performance; and so little were his nerves shaken, or his internal tranquillity disturbed by it, that he took his accustomed doze of three or four minutes, between the conclusion of the play, and the commencement of the farce, precisely as he would have done on any other night. This circumstance, which so strongly indicated his serenity, did not escape the notice of his attendants; as I know from more than one of those noblemen or gentlemen who accompanied him on that evening to the theatre.

He received, during the course of his reign, innumerable anonymous letters threatening his life, all which he treated with uniform indifference. A nobleman, who, I lament, is now no more, and who during many years was frequently about his person, as well as much in his confidence, the late Earl of Sandwich; assured me that he had seen several of them, which his majesty showed him, particularly when at Weymouth. While residing there during successive seasons, he was warned in the ambiguous manner already mentioned, not to ride out on particular days, on certain roads, if he valued his safety: but, the king never failed to mount his horse, and to take the very road indicated in the letter. Speaking on the subject to that nobleman, he said, "I very well know that any man who chooses to sacrifice his own life, may, whenever he pleases, take away mine; riding out, as I do continually, with a single equerry and a footman. I only hope that whoever may attempt it, will not do it in a barbarous or brutal manner." When we reflect on his conduct under these circumstances, as well

as during the tumults of March, 1769, and the riots of June, 1780;—and if we contrast it with the weak or pusillanimous deportment of Louis the Sixteenth, in July, 1789, when the French monarchy was virtually overturned; in October of the same year, at the time of his being carried prisoner from Versailles to Paris; or, on the 10th of August, 1792, when he abandoned the Tuilleries, to seek refuge in the National Assembly; we shall perceive the leading cause of the preservation of England, and of the destruction of France. To George the Third, considered in his kingly capacity, might well be applied the assertion,

—— " 'Tis the last key stone
That makes the arch."——

He seemed as if raised up by Providence, in its bounty to mankind, like an impregnable mound, to arrest the fury of revolution and jacobinism. How can we wonder that such a prince should prefer Pitt, notwithstanding the inflexibilities of his character, and the intractability of his natural disposition, for first minister; rather than Fox, who was successively the eulogist of Washington, of Laurens, of La Fayette, of Condorcet, and all the saints or martyrs of French and American insurrection!

That George the Third did not display those great energies of mind, those arts of condescending popularity, and that assemblage of extraordinary endowments, which met in Elizabeth; and which rendered her at once the terror of Europe, and the idol of her own subjects, must be admitted. That he could not, like Charles the Second, balance the errors or the vices of his government, by the seduction of his manners; and induce his people, like that prince, to love his person, though they condemned his conduct; we shall as readily confess. That he had not the advantage of being brought up amidst privations and mortifications of every kind, like William the Third; nor was, like William, compelled, at his first entrance on public life, to extricate his country by arms, from a powerful foreign invader:—that he did not nourish the profound ambition, or develop the deep policy and active military spirit of that illustrious sovereign, cannot be

disputed. But, if he was less distinguished by talents than William, he exhibited greater virtues. He resembled, indeed, in the leading features of his character, more the two Antonines, than Trajan or Augustus; and excited greater respect, than he awakened admiration. But ages may probably elapse, before we shall again behold on the throne, a prince more qualified on the whole to dispense happiness, and more justly an object of universal affection, blended with esteem.

*"Quo nihil majus meliusve Terris,
Fata donavere bonique Divi,
Nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum
Tempora priscum."*

If we compare him, as it is natural to do, either in his public capacity, or in his private conduct, with his two immediate predecessors, who may nevertheless justly be considered, on a fair review of their characters, as amiable and respectable sovereigns; the comparison is highly flattering to George the Third. He possessed indeed some advantages not enjoyed by either of those princes. His birth, which took place in this island; and that complete assimilation with the people of England, which can only result from the joint effect of habits, language, and education; gave him a superiority over them, and placed him upon higher ground. The two preceding kings were foreigners, who acceded, or were called to the throne, at an advanced period of life. George the First had attained his fifty-third, and George the Second his forty-fourth year, at their respective accession. They naturally and necessarily considered Hanover as their native country, though fortune had transported them to another soil. Even their policy, their treaties, their wars, and all their measures, were warped by foreign predilections, to which they too often sacrificed the interests of Great Britain. From these prejudices, the king, who had never visited his electoral dominions, nor knew Germany except by description, was exempt in a great degree. Less impetuous and irascible than his grandfather, he possessed likewise a more capacious mind, more command of temper, and better talents for government. In moderation, judgment,

and vigour of intellect, he at least equalled George the First; while in every other quality of the heart, or of the understanding, he exceeded that monarch. In his private life, as a husband, a father, and a man, he was superior to either. The conduct of George the First in these relations, will not indeed bear a severe inspection. His treatment of the unfortunate Sophia of Zell, his wife, whom he immured during the greater part of her life, in a solitary Hanoverian castle; cannot be easily reconciled to the feelings of justice, or even of humanity. As little did he consult decorum, or public opinion and morals, in bringing over with him from Hanover to this country, his two German mistresses; Sophia, Baroness Kilmanseck, and Melesina, Princess of Eberstein; whom he respectively created, the one, Countess of Darlington, and the other, Duchess of Kendal. We may see in Mr. Walpole's "reminiscences," how openly they were received here in that character. Charles the Second could not have observed less secrecy, with respect to Lady Castlemaine, or the Duchess of Portsmouth; nor have manifested less scruple about raising them to the dignity of the British peerage. Even at sixty-seven years of age, George the First, it appears, was about to have formed a new connexion of the same nature with Miss Brett, when he was carried off by an apoplectic stroke.

His son and successor displayed indeed the utmost affection for his queen, with whom he not only lived on terms of conjugal union, but whose loss he deplored with tears, and cherished the warmest respect for her memory. Yet he did not, on that account, restrain his inclinations for other women. Mrs. Howard, who became afterwards Countess of Suffolk; and Madame de Walmoden, better known as Countess of Yarmouth; the one previous, and the other subsequent, to Queen Caroline's decease; were both avowedly distinguished by the strongest marks of royal favour. The latter is accused by popular report, of having made on more than one occasion, a most unjustifiable use, or rather abuse, of her interest with the king. Even peerages were said to be sold and distributed for her pecuniary benefit; a

charge that has been revived from the treasury bench, by a man high in office, in our time. George the Third exhibited a model of self-command and of continence, at twenty-two, than which antiquity, Greek or Roman, can produce nothing more admirable, in the persons of Alexander or of Scipio. It is well known that before his marriage, he distinguished by his partiality Lady Sarah Lenox, then one of the most beautiful young women of high rank in the kingdom. Lord Holland, who had espoused her elder sister, was supposed, from obvious motives of interested ambition, to lend every facility in his power to the young king's meeting Lady Sarah, as he passed near Holland House frequently during his morning excursions on horseback. In the hay season of the year 1761, she might often be seen in the fields bordering on the high road near Kensington. Edward the Fourth, or Henry the Eighth, in his situation, regardless of consequences, would have married her, and placed her on the throne. Charles the Second, more licentious, would have endeavoured to seduce her. But, the king, who, though he admired her, neither desired to make her his wife nor his mistress, subdued his passion by the strength of his reason, his principles, and his sense of public duty. When we reflect on these circumstances, we may say with Horace, addressing ourselves to the British nation.

"Quando ullum inveniet parem?"

After having thus faithfully portrayed, though in the seeming language of panegyric, the character of George the Third; it is impossible, nevertheless, without violating truth, to deny that at this time, far from being popular, he was not even an object of general affection. We may justly question whether Charles the Second, though one of the most unprincipled, profligate, and licentious sovereigns who ever reigned in this country; destitute of morals; sunk in dissolute pleasures; who tamely beheld his fleet burned by the Dutch, in his own harbours; a pensioner of France; insensible to national glory; and regardless of the subjection of the continent to Louis the Fourteenth;—yet was ever so unpopular at any period of his reign. In order to

explain this seeming paradox, and to show how a prince, who apparently, from his many private virtues, should have possessed the attachment of his subjects; was nevertheless considered by a very large proportion of them, with contrary sentiments; we must review the principal features of his government. That retrospect will fully account for the circumstance, while it elucidates the events which followed the commencement of the year 1781.

To the confined plan of education, and sequestered life which the king led, subsequent to the death of his father, before his own accession to the crown, may be justly traced and attributed, at least in part, many of the errors, as well as the misfortunes, that mark the portion of the British annals, from 1760 down to the close of the American war. During near ten years which elapsed between the demise of Frederic, the Prince of Wales, early in 1751, and the decease of George the Second; a period when the human mind is susceptible of such deep impressions; he remained in a state of almost absolute seclusion from his future people, and from the world. Constantly resident at Leicester House, or at Carlton House, when he was in London; immured at Kew, whenever he went to the country; perpetually under the eye of his mother and of Lord Bute, who acted in the closest unity of design; he saw comparatively few other persons: and those only chosen individuals of both sexes. They naturally obtained, and long preserved, a very firm ascendant over him. When he ascended the throne, though already arrived at manhood, his very person was hardly known, and his character was still less understood, beyond a narrow circle. Precautions, it is well ascertained, were even adopted by the princess dowager, to preclude, as much as possible, access to him: precautions which, to the extent of her ability, were redoubled after he became king. It will scarcely be believed, but it is nevertheless true, that in order to prevent his conversing with any persons, or receiving any written intimations, anonymous or otherwise, between the drawing room and the door of Carlton House, when he was returning from thence to St. James's Palace, or to Buckingham

House, after his evening visits to his mother, she never failed to accompany him till he got into his sedan chair. "*Junius*," in May, 1770, after invidiously comparing Edward the Second and Richard the Second (two of the weakest or most misguided princes who ever reigned in this country), with George the Third; adds, when summing up the leading features of his character, "secluded from the world, attached from his infancy to one set of persons, and to one set of ideas, he can neither open his heart to new connexions, nor his mind to better information. A character of this sort is the soil fittest to produce that obstinate bigotry in politics and religion, which begins with a meritorious sacrifice of the understanding, and finally conducts the monarch and the martyr to the block."

A prince who had been endowed by nature with great energies of mind, would, no doubt, have soon liberated himself from such fetters. Yet we may remember that Louis the Fourteenth, who, whatever faults he committed in the course of his long reign, must nevertheless always be considered as a sovereign of very superior intellectual attainments; remained under the tutelage of his mother and his minister, of Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin, till even a later period of life than twenty-two. Nor did he then emancipate himself. It was death, that by carrying off the cardinal, allowed the king to display those qualities which have rendered so celebrated his name and reign. A prince, on the other hand, of a gay, social, dissipated, or convivial disposition, would equally have burst through these impediments. But, pleasure of every kind, in the common acceptance of the term, as meaning dissipation, presented scarcely any attractions for him, even previous to his marriage. Stories were indeed generally circulated, of his attachment to a young woman, a quaker, about this time of his life; just as scandal, many years afterwards, whispered that he distinguished Lady Bridget Tollemache by his particular attentions. The former report was probably well founded; and the latter assertion was unquestionably true; but, those persons who have enjoyed most opportunities of studying the king's cha-

acter, will most incline to believe, that in neither instance did he pass the limits of innocent gallantry, or occasional familiarity. As little was he to be seduced by the gratifications of the table, of wine, or of festivity. To all these allurements he seemed disinclined from natural constitution, moral and physical. His brother, Edward, Duke of York, plunged, on the contrary very early, into every sort of excess. But the example, however calculated to operate it might seem, produced no effect on a prince, modest, reserved, continent, capable of great self-command, and seeking almost all his amusements within a narrow domestic circle.

Before he succeeded to the crown, Lord Bute constituted in fact almost his only constant companion and confidant. To him alone the heir apparent unbosomed his thoughts: with him the prince rode, walked, read, and conversed. They were on horseback together upon the 25th of October, 1760, not far from Kew, when the intelligence of George the Second's sudden death reached him; confirmed immediately afterwards by Mr. Pitt in person, who then presided at the head of his majesty's counsels, or formed at least the soul of the cabinet. On receiving the information they returned to the palace, where the new king remained during the whole day, and passed that night, not coming up to St. James's till the ensuing morning. Mr. Pitt having presented him a paper, containing a few sentences, which he suggested, it might be proper for his majesty to pronounce on meeting the privy council; the king, after thanking him, replied that he had already considered the subject of his intended address, to which he made a very important addition with his own hand, commented on with acrimonious pleasantry by Wilkes, on account of its defective orthography. I mean the memorable declaration of his pride in the name of "*Briton*," or as it was there written, "*Britain*." The minister, who perceived that Lord Bute had anticipated him in the proposed address, made the unavoidable inference. It was indeed sufficiently obvious, that however his administration might nominally continue for some time, yet his influence and authority were eclipsed or superseded.

Lord Bute, though in his private character, if not irreproachable in all respects, yet at least decorous and correct; nor by any means deficient in abilities; appears to have been nevertheless a very unfit governor for such a prince. There exists even no doubt that George the Second opposed and disapproved his appointment to that important office; but, the partiality and perseverance of the princess dowager prevailed over the old king's repugnance. The circumstance of Lord Bute's being a native of Scotland, exposed him necessarily to malevolent attacks of many kinds; a fact at which, we who live in the present century ought not to wonder, when we reflect how a few years had then elapsed since the rebellion of 1745. Wilkes and Churchill, the one in prose, the other in poetry, always levelled their keenest shafts against the mother, and against the minister, of the young sovereign. His very virtues became matter of reproach, of ridicule, or of satire. "Junius," some years later, improving upon these first attempts to degrade him in the estimation of his subjects, condensed all the powers of declamation in his memorable "Letter to the King." Yet, the nation at large, candid and just, appreciated him fairly on his own merits. During the most gloomy periods of his reign, while they lamented or reprobated the measures of his various administrations, from Lord Bute down to Lord North inclusive, with little variation or exception; they admitted his personal virtues to form no slender extenuation of his public errors or mistakes. His exemplary discharge of every private duty, balanced in their estimate the misfortunes which his pertinacity, inflexibility, or injudicious selection of his confidential servants, had entailed upon the country and upon the empire.

It was well known that George the Second and his son Frederic, Prince of Wales, during several years previous to the decease of the latter, lived on terms of complete alienation, or rather of hostility. Scarcely indeed were any measures observed, or was any veil drawn before their mutual recriminations. — The prince expired suddenly, in the beginning of 1751, at Leicester House,

in the arms of Desnoyers, the celebrated dancing-master; who being near his bedside, engaged in playing on the violin for his royal highness's amusement, supported him in his last moments. His end was ultimately caused by an internal abscess, that had long been forming, in consequence of a blow which he received in the side from a cricket ball, while he was engaged in playing at that game, on the lawn at Cliefden House in Buckinghamshire, where he then principally resided. It did not take place, however, for several months subsequent to the accident. A collection of matter having been produced, which burst in his throat, the discharge instantly suffocated him. The king, his father, though he never went to visit him during the whole progress of his illness, sent, however, constantly to make enquiries; and received accounts, every two hours, of his state and condition. But he was so far from despairing altogether of Frederic's recovery, that, on the contrary, he considered such an event as highly probable, down to the very evening on which his royal highness actually expired: — for I know, that only a short time before, the king being engaged in conversation with the Countess of Yarmouth, when the page entered, announcing that the prince was better, "There now," said his majesty, turning to her, "I told you that he would not die." On the evening of his decease, the 20th of March, George the Second had repaired, according to his usual custom, to Lady Yarmouth's apartments situated on the ground floor in St. James's palace, where a party of persons of distinction of both sexes, generally assembled for the purpose. His majesty had just sat down to play, and was engaged at cards, when a page, despatched from Leicester House, arrived, bringing information that the prince was no more. He received the intelligence without testifying any violent emotion. Then rising, he crossed the room to Lady Yarmouth's table, who was likewise occupied at play; and leaning over her chair, said in a low tone of voice in German, "Fitz is dode." Freddy is dead. Having communicated it to her, he instantly withdrew. She followed him, the com-

pany broke up, and the news became public. These particulars were related to me by the late Lord Sackville, who made one of Lady Yarmouth's party, and heard the king announce to her his son's decease.

Frederic seems never to have enjoyed from his early youth, a distinguished place in the affection of his father, whose partiality was reserved for his youngest son, William, Duke of Cumberland. During the last twelve years of Frederic's life, we know that he passed much of his time in anticipations of his future sovereignty; and in forming administrations, which, like his own reign, were destined never to be realized. Among the noblemen and gentlemen who occupied a high place in his favour or friendship, were Charles, Duke of Queensberry, the patron of Gay, who died in 1778; Mr. Spencer, brother to the second Duke of Marlborough, and commonly called Jack Spencer; Charles, Earl of Middlesex, afterwards Duke of Dorset, and his brother, Lord John Sackville, together with Francis, Earl of Guildford. The personal resemblance that existed between Lord North (son of the last mentioned peer, who was subsequently first minister), and Prince George, was thought so striking, as to excite much remark and pleasantry on the part of Frederic himself, who often jested on the subject with Lord Guildford; observing, that the world would think one of their wives had played her husband false, though it might be doubtful which of them lay under the imputation. Persons who may be disposed to refine upon the prince's observation, will perhaps likewise be struck with other points of physical similarity between George the Third and Lord North; in particular, with the loss of sight, a privation common to both in the decline of life.

Lady Archibald Hamilton formed, during many years, the object of Frederic's avowed and particular attachment. In order to be near him, she resided in Pall-Mall, in the house afterwards occupied by the late Lord Sackville, close to Carlton House; the prince having allowed her to construct a drawing-room, the windows of which commanded over the gardens of that palace, and the house

itself communicated with them. Towards men of genius, his royal highness always affected to extend his protection. *Glover*, the writer of "*Leonidas*," enjoyed his confidence: though we may justly doubt how much of it was given to him as a member of parliament, the friend of Pulteney and Pitt; how much was extended to him, as a poet. The prince showed uncommon deference for *Pope*, whom he visited at Twickenham; a circumstance to which that author alludes with natural pride, when, after enumerating the great or illustrious persons who honoured him with their regard and friendship, he subjoins,

"And if yet higher the proud list should end,
Still let me add, no follower, but a friend."

In force of character, steadiness, vigour of mind, and the qualities that fit men for government, even his friends considered the prince to be deficient. Nor was economy to be numbered among the virtues that he displayed; he having before his decease contracted debts to a large amount, which were never discharged. Even through the medium of Dodington's description, who was partial to Frederic's character and memory, we cannot conceive any very elevated idea of him. His court seems to have been the centre of cabal, the very cave of *Æolus*, torn by contending candidates for the guidance of his future imaginary reign. The Earl of Egmont, and Dodington himself, were avowedly at the head of two great hostile parties. In November, 1749, we find his royal highness, in a secret conclave held at Carlton House, making all the financial dispositions proper to be adopted on the demise of the king, his father; and framing a new civil list. At the close of these mock deliberations, he binds the three assistants to abide by, and support his plans; giving them his hand, and making them take hands with each other. The transaction, as narrated by Dodington, who was, himself, one of the party, reminds the reader of a similar convocation commemorated by Sallust, and is not unlike one of the scenes in "*Venice Preserved*." It was performed, however, after dinner, which may perhaps

form its best apology. The diversions of the prince's court, appear to us equally puerile. Three times, within thirteen months preceding his decease, Dodington accompanied him and the Princess of Wales, to fortune-tellers; the last of which frolics took place scarcely nine weeks before his death. After one of these magical consultations, apparently dictated by anxiety to penetrate his future destiny; but, in answer to which inquiries, the fortune-teller might have replied with Umbricius,

“Fumus promittere patris
Nec volo, nec possum;”

the party supped with Mrs. Cannon, the princess's midwife. Frederic used to go, disguised, to Hockley-in-the-Hole, to witness bull-baiting. Either Lord Middlesex, or Lord John Sackville, father to the late Duke of Dorset, were commonly his companions on such expeditions. As far as we are authorised from these premises, to form a conclusion, his premature death before he ascended the throne, ought not to excite any great national regret.

George the Second, who survived the prince near ten years, died at last not less suddenly than his son, though at the advanced age of seventy-seven; a period attained by no sovereign in modern history, except Louis the Fourteenth. A rupture in some of the vessels, or in the membrane of the heart, carried him off in a few minutes. During his whole life, but, particularly for a number of years before his decease, he had been subject to such constant palpitations about the region of the heart, especially after dinner, that he always took off his clothes, and reposed himself for an hour in bed, of an afternoon. It order to accommodate himself to this habit or infirmity, Mr. Pitt, when, as secretary of state he was sometimes necessitated to transact business with the king during the time that he lay down, always knelt on a cushion by the bed-side; a mark of respect which contributed to render him not a little acceptable to his majesty. At his rising, George the Second dressed himself completely a second time, and commonly passed the evening at cards, with Lady Yarmouth, in a select

party. His sight had greatly failed him, for some time preceding his decease. I have heard Mr. Fraser say, who was, during many years, under secretary of state, that in 1760, a few months before the king died, having presented a paper to him for his signature, at Kensington (probably at a time when the secretary of state was prevented by indisposition from performing that duty, or by some other indispensable cause, which Fraser did not explain); George the second took the pen in his hand; and after, as he conceived affixing his name to it, returned it to Fraser. But, so defective was his vision, that he had neither dipped the pen in the ink, nor did he perceive that of course he had only drawn it over the paper, without making any impression. Fraser, aware of the king's blindness, yet, unwilling to let his majesty perceive that he discovered it, said, “Sir, I have given you so bad a pen, “that it will not write. Allow me to present you a better pen for the purpose,” then dipping it himself in the ink, he returned it to the king, who, without making any remark, instantly signed the paper.

He was unquestionably an honest, well intentioned, and good prince; of very moderate, but not mean talents; frugal in his expenses, from natural character: more inclined to avarice than any King of England since Henry the Seventh; irascible and hasty, as well as capable of imbibing strong prejudices of many kinds; but, not vindictive in his temper. Imbued with a strong enmity to France and as warm a predilection for Germany, he never enjoyed such felicity as when at Herenhausen, surrounded with his Hanoverian courtiers and subjects. William the Third, in like manner, seemed to taste much more happiness, while hunting at Loo, amidst the sterile sands of Guelderland, than at Whitehall, or at Hampton Court. At the battle of Dettingen, in 1743, it is well known that George the Second's horse, which was unruly, ran away with him to a considerable distance. General Cyrus Trapaud, then an ensign, by seizing the horse's bridle, enabled his majesty to dismount in safety. “Now that I am once on my legs,” said he, “I am sure I shall not run away.” Having enquired Trapaud's name, the king

always distinguished him afterwards in military promotions. When incensed either with his ministers, or with his attendants, he was sometimes not master of his actions, nor attentive to preserve his dignity. On these occasions, his hat, and it is asserted, even his wig, became frequently the objects on which he expended his anger.

Queen Caroline, by her address, her judicious compliances, and her activity of character, maintained, down to the time of her decease in 1737, a great ascendant over him. She formed the chief conducting wire between the sovereign and his first minister. It is a fact, that Sir Robert Walpole and her majesty managed matters with so much art, as to keep up a secret understanding by watch-words, even in the drawing-room, when and where George the Second was present. According to the king's temper, frame of mind, or practicability on the points which Sir Robert wished to carry, the queen signified to him whether to proceed, or to desist, on that particular day. This communication was so well preconceived, and so delicately executed, as to be imperceptible by the by-standers. Sir Robert lost a most able and vigilant ally, when Queen Caroline died. Her decease was indeed a misfortune to her husband, to her children, and to the nation. She sacrificed her life to the desire of concealing her complaint; a rupture of the bowels, which might have been easily reduced, if she had not delayed the disclosure of it, till a mortification took place. We have not possessed, since Elizabeth's death, a queen of more talent, capacity, and strength of understanding, than Caroline of Brandenburg Anspach. Anne of Denmark, wife of James the First, was a woman of mean endowments, deficient in judgment, and of doubtful moral character. Henrietta Maria of France, possessed great personal beauty, charms of conversation, and graces of deportment: but she was violent, bigoted in her attachment to the catholic faith, and conducted by her imprudent counsels, to accelerate the ruin of Charles the First. Catherine of Braganza, though a woman of virtue, wanted every attraction of mind or of body; and Mary of Modena, James the Second's queen,

however agreeable in her person, as well as correct in her conduct she might be, was superstitious to excess; and from that circumstance unfit for the throne of England, though she might have adorned a little Italian court. Mary, consort of William the Third, approached the nearest to Queen Caroline, but did not equal her in mental endowments. The last princess of the Stuart line, Anne, though in private life amiable, virtuous, and blameless, cannot enter into any competition with Caroline of Brandenburg Anspach.

At the time of his decease, George the Second certainly enjoyed great and universal popularity: but, to Mr. Pitt, afterwards created Earl of Chatham, he was eminently indebted for this gratifying distinction at the close of life, when victory was said to have erected her altar between his aged knees. The misfortunes and disgraces which preceded Pitt's entrance into office, had in fact forced him upon the king; who, notwithstanding that minister's recognized talents, did not employ him without the utmost reluctance. The inglorious naval engagement that took place in the Mediterranean, between Byng and La Galissoniere; for his conduct during which action, the former of those admirals suffered death; the consequent loss of Minorca; the defeat of General Braddock in Carolina; the repulse sustained before Ticonderoga; the ignominious capitulation of William, Duke of Cumberland, at Closter-Seven, afterwards eluded or violated; and the disgraceful expedition against Rochfort;—these ill-concerted, or ill-executed measures, at the commencement of the war of 1756, had not only brought the administration into contempt, but had much diminished the national affection borne towards the sovereign. From the period of Pitt's nomination to a place in the cabinet, success almost uniformly attended on the British arms. Though only occupying the post of secretary of state, he directed, or rather he dictated the operations, at home and abroad. The treasury, the admiralty, the war office, all obeyed his orders with prompt and implicit submission. Lord Anson and the Duke of Newcastle, sometimes, it is true, remonstrated, and often com-

plained; but always finished by compliance. In the full career of Pitt's ministerial triumphs, George the Second died; an event which it is impossible not to consider as having been a great national misfortune, when we reflect on the nature of the peace which took place little more than two years afterwards, in November, 1762. Mr. Pitt, we may be assured, would have dictated far different terms to the two branches of the House of Bourbon. The new king did not indeed immediately dismiss so able and popular a statesman; but, it was soon suspected that his administration, though it might languish, or continue for a few months, would not prove of long duration. Lord Bute had already secured the exclusive regard and favour of the young monarch.

The late Mrs. Boscawen, widow of the admiral of that name, so distinguished in our naval annals, whose connexions enabled her to collect many curious facts in the course of a long life; has often assured me, that Lord Bute's first personal introduction to the Prince of Wales originated in a very singular accident. That nobleman, as is well known, married the only daughter of the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montague, by whom he had a very numerous family. She brought him eventually likewise a large landed property: but, as her father, Mr. Wortley, did not die till the year 1761; and as her brother, the eccentric Edward Wortley Montague, lived to a much later period; I believe, down to 1777; Lord Bute, encumbered with a number of children, found his patrimonial fortune very unequal to maintaining the figure befitting his rank in life. After passing some years in profound retirement, on his estate in the Isle of Bute, he revisited England, and took a house on the banks of the Thames. During his residence there, he was induced to visit Egham races, about the year 1747. But, as he either did not at that time keep a carriage, or did not use it to convey him to the race ground, he condescended to accompany a medical acquaintance; in other words, the apothecary that attended his lordship's family, who carried him there in his own chariot. Frederic, Prince of Wales, who then resided at Cliefden, honoured the races on

that day with his presence; where a tent was pitched for his accommodation, and the reception of the princess his consort. The weather proving rainy, it was proposed, in order to amuse his royal highness before his return home, to make a party at cards: but a difficulty occurred about finding persons of sufficient rank to sit down at the same table with him. While they remained under this embarrassment, somebody observed that Lord Bute had been seen on the race ground; who, as being an earl, would be peculiarly proper to make one of the prince's party. He was soon found, informed of the occasion which demanded his attendance, brought to the tent, and presented to Frederic. When the company broke up, Lord Bute thought of returning back to his own house: but his friend the apothecary had disappeared: and with him had disappeared the chariot, in which his lordship had been brought to Egham races. The prince was no sooner made acquainted with the circumstance, than he insisted on Lord Bute's accompanying him to Cliefden, and there passing the night. He complied, rendered himself extremely acceptable to their royal highnesses, and thus laid the foundation, under a succeeding reign, of his political elevation, which flowed originally in some measure from this strange contingency.

Lord Bute, when young, possessed a very handsome person, of which advantage he was not insensible; and he used to pass many hours every day, as his enemies asserted, occupied in contemplating the symmetry of his own legs, during his solitary walks by the side of the Thames. Even after he became an inmate at Cliefden, and at Leicester House, he frequently played the part of "Lothario," in the private theatricals exhibited for the amusement of their royal highnesses, by the late Duchess of Queensbury. To this fact Wilkes alludes with malignant ridicule, in his memorable letter of the "15th of March, 1763," addressed to the Earl of Bute, where he says, "in one *part*, which was remarkably *humane* and *amiable*, you were so great, that the general exclamation was, *here you did not act*. In another *part*, you were no less perfect: I mean, in the famous scene of *Hamlet*, where you pour

fatal poison into the ear of a good unsuspecting king." Besides so many external accomplishments, he possessed a cultivated mind, illuminated by a taste for various branches of the fine arts and letters. For the study of botany he nourished a decided passion, which he gratified to the utmost: and in the indulgence of which predilection, he manifested, on some occasions, a princely liberality. Dr. Hill, commonly denominated *Sir John*, after he received the Swedish Order of *Vasa* from Gustavus the Third, was one of the objects of his bounty. Nor did he fail in extending his protection and patronage to men of letters: but it cannot be denied that he manifested some national partiality in their selection. *John Home*, the author of "*Douglas*," a tragedy which attained a reputation superior to its merits; as well as *Mullet*, or *Mulloch* (for his name was differently written), and *Murphy*, all partook of the ministerial favour. So did *James Macpherson*, who ushered into the world some of the poems of *Ossian*, under the immediate auspices of the first lord of the treasury.

Of a disposition naturally retired and severe, Lord Bute was not formed for an extensive commerce with mankind, or endowed by nature with talents for managing popular assemblies. Even in the interior of his family he was austere, harsh, difficult of access, and sometimes totally inaccessible to his own children. In the House of Lords he neither displayed eloquence, nor graciousness of manners. But he proved himself likewise deficient in a quality still more essential for a first minister, firmness of character. Yet, with these political defects of mind, and of personal deportment, he undertook to displace, and he aspired to succeed Mr. Pitt, at a moment when that minister had carried the glory of the British arms to an unexampled height, by sea and land. We cannot sufficiently regret that George the Third should not have contented himself with heaping honours and dignities on him, carefully excluding him from any political employment. Few princes, however, of whom history preserves any record, have manifested at twenty-three, a judgment so superior to the natural partialities of youth. Even Elizabeth, though

she placed Cecil at the head of her councils, yet committed her armies successively to the conduct of her two favourites, the Earls of Leicester and Essex.

After an administration of about two years, passed either in the post of secretary of state, or as first lord of the treasury; during which time he brought the war with France and Spain to a conclusion; Lord Bute, abandoning his royal master, quitted his situation, and again withdrew to private life. No testimonies of national regret, or of national esteem, accompanied him at his departure from office. His magnificent house in Berkeley Square, though scarcely completed, exposed him to very malignant comments, respecting the means by which he had reared so expensive a pile. His enemies asserted that he could not possibly have possessed the ability, either from his patrimonial fortune, or in consequence of his marriage, to erect such a structure. As little could he be supposed to have amassed wherewithal, during his very short administration, to suffice for its construction. The only satisfactory solution of the difficulty therefore, lay in imagining, however unjustly, that he had either received presents from France, or had made large purchases in the public funds previous to the signature of the preliminaries. "*Junius*," addressing the Duke of Bedford, who signed that peace, in his letter of the "19th September, 1769," written within seven years afterwards; charges the duke in the most unequivocal terms, with betraying and selling his country. "Your patrons," says he, "wanted an ambassador who would submit to make concessions, without daring to insist upon any honourable condition for his sovereign. Their business required a man, who had as little feeling for his own dignity, as for the welfare of his country; and they found him in the first rank of the nobility. Belleisle, Goree, Gaudaloupe, St. Lucia, Martinique, the Fishery, and the Havannah, are glorious monuments of your grace's talents for negotiation. My lord, we are too well acquainted with your pecuniary character, to think it possible that so many public sacrifices should have been made, without some private compensations. Your conduct carries with it an internal evidence, beyond all

the legal proofs of a court of justice." Such an anonymous charge, however fascinating or energetic may be the language in which it is clothed, certainly ought not to be considered as proof; but, no answer was ever made to it either by the duke, or by any of his friends, if we except Sir William Draper's vague and unauthorized letter of the "7th of October, 1769."

Dr. Musgrave, an English physician, who practised medicine at Paris in 1763, and whose name has been known in the republic of letters, by the publication of some tragedies of Euripides; did not scruple to assert publicly, that the Princess Dowager of Wales and Lord Bute received money from the French court, for aiding to effect the peace. I am acquainted with the individuals, gentlemen of the highest honour and most unimpeached veracity, to whom Dr. Musgrave himself related the circumstance, at Paris, in 1764, almost immediately after the treaty of Fontainebleau. And if I do not name them, it is only because they are still alive. Dr. Musgrave did not retract his accusation, when he was examined at the bar of the House of Commons, some years afterwards, in the month of January, 1770, upon the same point. He maintained, on the contrary, his original assertion, which he supported by facts or circumstances calculated to authenticate its truth; though the house thought proper to declare it "frivolous, and unworthy of credit." "Junius," writing in the month of May, 1770, says, "Through the whole proceedings of the House of Commons in this session, there is an apparent, a palpable consciousness of guilt, which has prevented their daring to assert their own dignity, where it has been immediately and grossly attacked. In the course of Dr. Musgrave's examination, he said every thing that can be conceived mortifying to individuals, or offensive to the house. They voted his information frivolous; but, they were awed by his firmness and integrity, and sunk under it. Dr. Musgrave resided in this country, during the last years of his life; and died, I believe, at Exeter, in the summer of the year 1780.

Similar reflections indeed, at different periods of our history, have been thrown

not only upon ministers, but even upon kings. Lord Clarendon, when chancellor, under Charles the Second, having, like Lord Bute, undertaken to build a magnificent house in London, soon after the sale of Dunkirk to Louis the Fourteenth, about 1664; it was named by the people "Dunkirk House," on the supposition of its having been raised by French money. No person can doubt of Charles the Second himself having received large sums from the court of Versailles, for purposes inimical to the interests of his people. So did his successor, James the Second. Bribes were even confidently said and believed to have been given to various of the courtiers or favourites of William the Third, from the East-India Company, and other corporate bodies, in order to procure the consent or approbation of the sovereign, to the renewal of their charters. The Duchess of Kendal, mistress of George the First; as well as Craggs, father of the secretary of state of the same name, and himself, at the time, post-master general; together with other individuals about the court or person of that monarch, were either known or supposed to have been implicated in the transactions of the memorable South Sea year, 1720, when such immense sums were gained and lost in that ruinous speculation. Malignity did not spare the king himself, who, it was asserted, became a sharer in the acquisitions. Lord Bute, at the distance of half a century, is still believed by many persons to have rendered the treaty of Fontainebleau subservient to his private emoluments: a supposition, which, however unjust or unmerited it may be, was again renewed twenty years later, at the conclusion of the peace of 1783, against Lord Shelburne, with greater virulence, and with bolder affirmations? Such were the unfortunate results of the Earl of Bute's ministry, which must be considered as having given the first blow to the popularity enjoyed by the king, at his accession to the throne.

It is an indisputable fact that Lord Bute, terrified or disgusted at the indications of resentment shown towards him by the nation, forsook his master; and that he was not dismissed or aban-

done by the sovereign. He was the first, though not the last minister, who, in the course of the present reign, exhibited that example of timidity, or weariness, or desertion. But his ostensible relinquishment of office, by no means restored to the king the confidence or the affections of his subjects. Even when nominally divested of power, Lord Bute was still supposed to direct, unseen, the wheels of government. However false and unfounded might be this imputation, and such I have ever considered it, yet it operated with irresistible force. A cry of secret influence arose, more pernicious in its effects on the country at large, than even the open accusations lately levelled against the incapacity, or pretended venality of the first minister. The Grenville administration, which succeeded, was stigmatized as being only a machine, the puppets of which were agitated by concealed wires. It is obvious, that no charge in the power of malevolence to invent and circulate, could be more calculated to prejudice the king in the estimation of his people. But, it became further augmented by another topic of abuse and declamation, founded on the extraordinary degree of personal favour enjoyed by Lord Bute at Carlton House, and the predilection with which he was known to be regarded by the Princess Dowager of Wales. Satirical prints, generally dispersed throughout the kingdom, in which her royal highness was not at all spared, inflamed the public mind. Comparisons, drawn from English history, particularly from the reign of Edward the Third, when the Queen Dowager Isabella, and Mortimer her favourite, were known or supposed to have lived in a criminal union; — these allusions, which were disseminated in all the periodical works of the time, and particularly in the “North Britain,” made a deep impression.

Even the filial deference and respect, manifested by his majesty after his accession, down to the last moment of her life, towards his mother, was converted into a subject not only of censure, but of accusation, as originating in unworthy motives, or in culpable subservience. It cannot however be denied that Lord Bute enjoyed a higher place in that princess's

favour, if not in her affection, than seemed compatible with strict propriety. His visits to Carlton House, which were always performed in the evening; and the precautions taken to conceal his arrival; though they might perhaps have been dictated more by an apprehension of insult from the populace, to whom he was obnoxious, than from any improper reasons; yet awakened suspicion. He commonly made use, on these occasions, of the sedan chair and the chairmen of Miss Vansittart, a lady who held a distinguished place in her royal highness's family. In order more effectually to elude notice, the curtains of the chair were close drawn. The repartee of Miss Chudleigh, afterwards better known as Duchess of Kingston, at that time a maid of honour at Carlton House; when reproached by her royal mistress, for the irregularities of her conduct, obtained likewise much publicity. “*Votre altesse royale sait,*” replied she, “*que chacune a son But.*” As the king was accustomed to repair frequently of evenings to Carlton House, and there to pass a considerable time, the world supposed, though probably with great injustice, that the sovereign, his mother, and the ex-minister met, in order to concert, and to compare their ideas; thus forming a sort of interior cabinet, which controlled and directed the ostensible administration.

That after having so precipitately thrown up the ministerial reins in 1763, Lord Bute felt desirous of again resuming his political power, I know from good authority. And that he was aided in the attempt by the princess, with all her influence, is equally matter of fact; but their joint efforts proved unavailing to effect the object. A nobleman, who was accustomed at that time to form one of the party, which met at Carlton House, and who usually remained there while his majesty stayed; assured me that every measure had been concerted between her royal highness and Lord Bute, for the purpose of bringing him again into ministry. As the first necessary step towards its accomplishment, they agreed that he should endeavour to obtain permission to see the despatches, which were often sent to the king from the secretary of

state, while he continued with his mother. On those occasions, when the green box containing letters or papers, arrived, he always withdrew into another room, in order to peruse them at his ease. Lord Bute, as had been pre-arranged, upon the messenger bringing a despatch, immediately took up two candles, and proceeded before the king to the closet; expecting that his majesty, when they were alone together, would communicate to him its nature; and that he should thus begin again to transact business. But, the king, unquestionably aware of the intention, and probably disgusted at the want of firmness which his minister had formerly shown, or from other unascertained causes, extinguished at once the hopes entertained from this project. When he came to the door of the room, he stopped, took the candles out of Lord Bute's hand, and then dismissing him, shut the door; after which he proceeded to examine the despatches, alone. Lord Bute returned to the company, and the experiment was never repeated.

If the selection of that nobleman for the office of first minister, and the dismissal of Mr. Pitt, deprived the king of the affections of many loyal subjects; the terms upon which the treaty of Fontainebleau was concluded, early in 1763, by Lord Bute, excited the strongest sensations of general disapprobation throughout the country. I am old enough to remember the expressions of that condemnation, which, it is impossible not to admit, were well founded. When we reflect that the navy of France had been nearly annihilated, as early as 1759, by Sir Edward Hawke, in the action which took place at Quiberon; that Spain could make little or no opposition to us on the ocean; and that we were masters of Quebec, Montreal, together with all Canada; Cape Breton, Pondicherry, Goree, Belleisle, the Havannah, and a large part of Cuba; besides the Islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe; not to mention the capture of Manilla, which, on account of its remote position in the eastern seas, was not then known:—while, on the other hand, the enemy, though they probably would have effected the conquest or reduction of Portugal, in the course of the

ensuing campaign; yet had taken nothing from us, which they had retained, except Minorca;—when we consider these facts, what shall we say to a peace, which restored to the two branches of the House of Bourbon, every possession above enumerated, except Canada?—for as to Cape Breton, though it was ceded to us, yet, when dismantled, it became only an useless desert. Accepting, as we did, in exchange for so many valuable colonies or settlements in every quarter of the globe, the cession of the two Floridas from the crown of Spain, together with the restitution of Minorca by France. At the distance of more than half a century, when the passions and prejudices of the hour have ceased, we cannot consider such a treaty without astonishment and concern. Scarcely indeed does the peace of Utrecht justly awaken warmer feelings of indignation; for concluding which pacification, its authors were impeached, imprisoned, or compelled to fly their country. If Lord Bute escaped the fate of Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, he has not been more exempt than were those ministers, from the censures of his contemporaries and of posterity. Nor did Queen Anne perhaps sustain a greater loss of reputation and popularity, by signing the treaty of Utrecht, than George the Third suffered by concluding that of Fontainebleau. Its impolicy appears not less glaring, nor less obvious, than its defects of every other kind. The expulsion of the French from Canada, and of the Spaniards from Florida, by liberating the American colonies from all apprehension of foreign enemies, laid the inevitable foundation of their rebellion; and effected their subsequent emancipation from Great Britain, within the space of twenty years. This necessary result of such measures, perfectly foreseen at the time, was pointed out by Dr. Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, as well as by others. The House of Bourbon, soon recovering from the wounds inflicted by Pitt, contested anew, with better success, for the empire of the sea. Neither the Havannah, Belleisle, nor Manilla, have ever passed a second time under the power of the English. If we weigh these circumstances, we shall not wonder that motives unworthy of an upright

minister, or of an able statesman, were attributed to Lord Bute. Nor shall we be surprised, that the incapacity or errors of the administration, diminished in no small degree the respect justly inspired by the private virtues of the sovereign.

The injudicious persecution of Wilkes, completed the unpopularity, which Lord Bute's persons and measures had begun to produce throughout the nation. Whatever might have been the misconduct of Wilkes; and however deficient he might have appeared in those moral qualities which entitle to public respect, or even to individual approbation: yet, from the instant that he became an object of royal or ministerial resentment, on account of his attachment to the cause of freedom, he found protectors in the public. Neither his wit, his talents, nor his courage, could have raised him to political eminence, if he had not been singled out for severe, not to say unconstitutional, prosecution. The two secretaries of state, and the lord steward of the household, had they been hired by his worst enemies, to injure their royal master in the esteem of his people; and to throw, as it were, upon *him*, the odium of *their* violence, or incapacity, or ignorance; could not have done it more effectually, than by the line of action which they adopted. Lord Talbot is consigned to eternal ridicule (as Pope says that Cromwell is "damned to everlasting fame"); in that incomparable letter written by Wilkes to the late Earl Temple, on the 5th of October, 1762, descriptive of the entertaining duel fought at Bagshot only two hours before, where the lord steward appears in the most contemptible point of view. The Earls of Egremont and Halifax, by issuing a general warrant for the seizure of Wilkes, and taking his person into custody; while they compromised the majesty of the crown, trampled on the liberties of the subject, and violated the essence of the English constitution. Men who commented with severity on these measures of impolitic resentment, arraigned them as more characteristic of the vindictive administration of James the Second, than becoming the mild government of George the Third. Wilkes, nevertheless, wounded in a duel, repeatedly menaced with assassination, pursued by the House of Commons, and

outlawed by the Court of King's Bench; withdrew into France, where he insensibly sunk into oblivion. His very name, and his public merits, as well as his private sufferings, seemed to be equally forgotten by the nation, during two or three years.

But, the Duke of Grafton, who had become first minister, after the extinction of the short and feeble administration of Lord Rockingham, appeared as if desirous to improve upon the errors, and to renew the most unpopular acts of his predecessor, Lord Bute. Instead of wisely extending the pardon of the crown to Mr. Wilkes, or treating him with magnanimous contempt, when he returned from Paris: the duke, in defiance of their past intimacy and familiarity, put in force the penalties of his sentence of outlawry; thus rendering him a second time the object of general compassion and protection. Rejected as a candidate to represent the city of London, he was elected member for the county of Middlesex. Tumultuous or disorderly assemblies of the people in St. George's Fields, whom it was esteemed necessary to repress by a military force; and in performing which service, some individuals who apparently had taken no part in the riots, were killed or wounded; exasperated the nation against the authors of such severities. The House of Commons adopting the principles, as well as the enmities of the administration, expelled Wilkes from his seat, declared him ineligible to sit among them, and placed Colonel Luttrell in his room. While the pardon of the crown was extended to persons convicted of the most sanguinary outrages and violence during the election at Brentford; by measures of consummate incapacity, a popular individual was singled out for the whole vengeance of the government and the legislature. The tumults of London in March, 1769, which menaced with insult or attack, even the palace of the sovereign, bore no feeble resemblance to the riotous disorders that preceded the civil wars, under Charles the First. A hearse, followed by the mob, was driven into the court yard at St. James's, decorated with insignia of the most humiliating or indecent description. I have

always understood that the late Lord Mountmorris, then a very young man, was the person who on that occasion personated the executioner, holding an axe in his hands, and his face covered with a crape. The king's firmness did not however forsake him, in the midst of these trying ebullitions of democratic rage. He remained calm and unmoved in the drawing-room, while the streets surrounding his residence, echoed with the shouts of an enraged multitude, who seemed disposed to proceed to the greatest extremities. But the Duke of Grafton did not manifest equal constancy, nor display the same resolution as his master. It seemed to be the fate of George the Third to be served by ministers, as much his inferiors in personal and political courage, as in every other moral or estimable quality.

Another opponent, still more formidable than Mr. Wilkes, had arisen amidst these convulsions of the capital and the country; who, from the place of his concealment, like Paris in the "Iliad," inflicted the severest wounds, and who seems to have eluded all discovery, down to the present hour. It is obvious that I mean "Junius." This celebrated writer, whom the obtrusive and imprudent vanity of Sir William Draper, even more than his own matchless powers of composition, originally forced upon the notice of the public, first appeared in January, 1769. His opening letter, addressed to the printer of the "Public Advertiser," then a popular newspaper, depicts in the blackest colours, the situation of the country; dishonoured, as he asserts, in the eyes of foreign nations; disunited, oppressed, and ill-administered at home. Like Satan, when invoking his stupified and fallen associates, he seems to exclaim, while endeavouring to rouse the English nation from their political apathy,

"Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"

The conclusion of his opening address operated with amazing effect, and can hardly be exceeded in energy. "If," says he, "by the immediate interposition of Providence, it were possible for us to escape a crisis so full of terror and

despair, posterity will not believe the history of the present times. — They will not believe it possible that their ancestors could have survived or recovered from so desperate a condition, while a Duke of Grafton was prime minister; a Lord North, chancellor of the exchequer; a Weymouth, and a Hillsborough, secretaries of state; a Granby, commander-in-chief; and Mansfield, chief criminal judge of the kingdom." After transfixing with his keenest shafts, the commander-in-chief of the forces, the lord chief justice of the King's Bench, and the Duke of Bedford, he fastened, like a vulture, on the first minister. With an acrimony and ability that have perhaps never been equalled by any political writer, he endeavoured to point the public indignation equally against the person and the measures of the Duke of Grafton. Superior in beauty of diction, and all the elegance of literary composition, to Lord Bolingbroke; not inferior to Swift in closeness, as well as correctness of style, and in force of satire; the letters of "Junius" will be read as long as the English language endures. Nor did his pen, after exposing the want of spirit and energy in the government, respect even the majesty of the throne. In his memorable "Letter to the king;" dated the 19th of December, 1769, which cannot be perused without a mixture of admiration and indignation, he too successfully labours to render even the virtues of the sovereign suspicious and odious; while he attempts to degrade the royal character, in the opinions of his subjects. The avidity with which these publications were then sought after and perused, is difficult to be conceived at the present time, and never was exceeded at any period of our history. "Junius" may indeed justly be reckoned among the leading causes which drove the Duke of Grafton from the helm of affairs.

I have been assured by persons of honour and veracity, who were in the habits of continually seeing Mr. Bradshaw, then secretary of the treasury, and of knowing his private sentiments; that he made no secret to them, of the agony into which the Duke of Grafton was thrown by these productions. Such was their effect and operation on his

mind, as sometimes utterly to incapacitate him during whole days, for the ministerial duties of his office. There are, nevertheless, many who believe and assert, that his sudden resignation was not so much produced by the attacks of "Junius," as it originated from another quarter. It has been pretended that the Princess Dowager of Wales, highly indignant at the mention made of her name, in the examination and depositions of Dr. Musgrave at the bar of the House of Commons; remonstrated strongly with the king, on the supineness of his first minister, in permitting, or rather in not suppressing such parliamentary enquiries. However the fact may be, it is certain that at a moment when such an event was least expected, in January, 1770, he resigned his office; giving as Lord Bute had done before another instance of ministerial dereliction, but not the last of the kind which has occurred in the course of the present reign. Lord North, who succeeded to his place, inherited likewise a considerable portion of his unpopularity.

Having mentioned the subject, and the productions of "Junius," it seems impossible to dismiss them without making some allusion to their author. I have always considered that secret, as the best kept of any in our time. It was, indeed, on many accounts, and for many reasons, a secret of the most perilous nature. For, the offences given, and the wounds inflicted by his pen, were too deep, and too severe, to admit of forgiveness, when we reflect that living sovereigns and ministers formed the objects selected for his attack. I have been assured that the king riding out in the year 1772, accompanied by his equerry, General Desaguliers, said to him in conversation, "We know who *Junius* is, and he will write no more." The general, who was too good a courtier to congratulate upon such a piece of intelligence, contented himself with bowing, and the discourse proceeded no further. Mrs. Shuttleworth, who was General Desaguliers's daughter, believed in the accuracy of this fact; but I nevertheless report it with becoming doubt. If, however, the king had penetrated to the secret, I do not believe that the Duke of Grafton, or the first Lord Mansfield, had arrived at any cer-

titude on the point, though their suspicions might be strongly directed towards some one individual. It is certain that Sir William Draper died in ignorance of his antagonist; and that he continued to express, down to a very short time before his decease, which took place at Bath, his concern at the prospect of going out of life, uninformed on the subject. Lord North either did not know, or professed not to know, his name. The late Lord Temple protested the same ignorance. He must nevertheless have lain within a very narrow circle: for, every evidence, internal and external, proves him to have been a person of pre-eminent parts, admirable information, high connexions, living almost constantly in the metropolis, and in good company; ignorant of nothing which was done at St. James's, in the two houses of parliament, in the war office, or in the courts of law; and personally acquainted with many anecdotes or facts, only to be attained by men moving in the first ranks of society. I do not speak of his classical attainments; because those might have been found among mere men of letters. "Junius" was a man of the world. Henry Sampson Woodfall, who printed the letters themselves, was ignorant of the name or quality of the writer, and remained so during his whole life. Who then, we repeat, was he?

Many individuals have become successively objects of suspicion, or of accusation. Lord *George Germain*, father of the present Duke of Dorset, was named among others. I knew him very intimately, and have frequently conversed with him on the subject. He always declared his ignorance of the author, but he appeared to be gratified and flattered by the belief or imputation lighting on himself. As far, however, as my opinion can have any weight, though, in common with mankind at large, I estimated very highly Lord George's talents, I considered them as altogether unequal to such literary productions. And I possessed the best means, as well as opportunities of forming my judgment, from his conversation and correspondence, both which I enjoyed for several years. Indeed, I apprehend it is unnecessary to waste much

time in attempting to disprove such a supposition, which has few advocates or supporters. Those persons who originally suggested, or who continue to maintain it, found the opinion principally on the attack of Lord Granby, contained in "Junius's" first letter. But, if we examine that composition, we shall see that the marquis is by no means singled out for animadversion. He only attracts his portion of satire, as a constituent member of the cabinet; and it was Sir William Draper's officious vanity which rendered him unfortunately more conspicuous than the Duke of Grafton, or Lord Mansfield. "It is you, Sir William Draper," says Junius, "who have taken care to represent your friend in the character of a drunken landlord, who deals out his promises as liberally as his liquor, and will suffer no man to leave his table either sorrowful or sober." And in a subsequent letter he observes, "I should justly be suspected of acting upon motives of more than common enmity to Lord Granby, if I continued to give you fresh materials, or occasion for writing in his defence." If, indeed, Lord George Germain was "Junius," his powers of composition had suffered a diminution between 1770 and 1780, and no longer continued as powerful at the latter period, as they had been ten years earlier in life. But, no man preserved at near seventy, the freshness and strength of his faculties in every branch, more perfect or undiminished than that nobleman. Nor, from the knowledge which I possessed of his loyalty, and attachment to the person of his sovereign, do I believe that any motives or feelings could ever have induced him to address to his majesty, the "Letter of *Junius* to the King."

As little do I conceive *Wilkes* to have been the man. I knew him likewise well, though not with the same intimacy as I did the last named nobleman. It must be owned that *Wilkes* possessed a classic pen, keen, rapid, cutting; and capable, as we have seen in the "North Briton," no less than in other political productions, of powerfully animating, or inflaming the public mind. His injuries were great; his feelings, acute: his spirit, undaunted; and his compositions, full of talent. But it was not

"Junius." *Wilkes's* two memorable letters, the one addressed to Lord Temple, in October, 1762, from Bagshot, immediately after his duel with Lord Talbot; and the other, written from his house, in Great George Street, on the 19th of December, 1763, to Dr. Brocklesby, subsequent to his duel with Martin; may vie in wit, pleasantry, and powers of ridicule, with any compositions in the English language. His letter, dated from "Paris, 22d October, 1764," appealing to the electors of Aylesbury, against the treatment which he met with from both houses of parliament, and from Lord Mansfield, challenges equal admiration. Lastly, his address to the Duke of Grafton, written likewise from "Paris, on the 12th of December, 1766," containing the animated relation of his arrest, followed by his interview with the Earls of Egremont and Halifax, which took place at the residence of the former nobleman in Piccadilly, now Cholmondeley House; can hardly be exceeded in energy, severity, and powers of reasoning. 'They charm, perhaps, as much as the writings of "Junius;" but, the difference between the two productions cannot be mistaken by any man who allows his reason fair play. *Wilkes* himself, who, instead of shrinking from the avowal, on the contrary would have gladly assumed the fame attending on it, at whatever personal risk, always disclaimed any title to such a distinction. "*Utinam scripsissem!*" Would to heaven I could have written them! was his reply, when charged with being the author.

Hugh Macauley Boyd, a gentleman who accompanied or followed Lord Macartney to Madras, in 1781, where he died a few years afterwards; has been named, and his pretensions have been strongly maintained in print, as well as in private society. It has been attempted, both in his case, and in that of *Wilkes*, to prove from facts of various kinds, and anecdotes, either true or imaginary, their respective right to the works of "Junius." But, I never could discover in the avowed writings of *Boyd*, any similarity, and still less any equality, with the letters of the unknown and immortal person in question. Nor would

it seem, as far as we are able to judge, that Boyd had, or could have, access to the information profusely exhibited through almost every page of "Junius," and which very few individuals were competent to attain. Boyd did not live in the circle where alone such materials were to be found, or to be collected.

I have heard the Reverend Philip Rosenhagen pointed out as "Junius." But the opinion never, I believe, had many supporters, nor did I ever regard it as entitled to serious refutation. I knew him as an acquaintance, between 1782 and 1785. He appeared to me to be a plausible, well informed man, imposing in his manner, of a classic mind, and agreeable conversation; living much in the world, received on the most intimate footing at Shelburne House, and possessing very considerable talents. There is, however, a wide interval between such abilities, however eminent, and those displayed by the writer under examination.

A more probable, or at least, a better concerted story, confidently circulated at the time, and which has been lately revived, was, that Mr. *William Greatrakes*, a native of Ireland, who lived with the Earl of Shelburne, and acted as his private secretary, composed the letters. The materials were said to have been furnished by Lord Shelburne, and worked up by his secretary. It was added, that he died in August, 1781, at Hungerford in Berkshire, not very far from that nobleman's seat, of Bow Wood; and lies buried in Hungerford churchyard, with a plain stone over his remains, together with a short inscription, terminated by the three Latin words,

"Stat Nominis Umbra;"

the motto, usually, or always prefixed to Junius's Letters. I have never considered this narration, however plausible it appears, as worthy of credit, or as meriting attention.

It has been recently attempted to prove that *Glover*, the distinguished author of "Leonidas," was "Junius;" and the confirmation of the assertion has been sought, in the "Memoirs of a Celebrated Literary and Political Character," lately published. But though every line of

those "Memoirs," bespeaks the writer to have possessed equal ability and integrity; living in a high circle, himself a member of the House of Commons during many years;—though the same ardent spirit of freedom which animates *Glover* as a poet, is diffused over this production; and though various passages in it, may seem to bear a degree of resemblance or analogy to the animated Apostrophes of "Junius;"—yet, no person who has perused attentively the work in question, can for an instant persuade himself of the identity of the two men. If, however, these grounds of belief, drawn from the internal evidence contained in the respective compositions, should fail in producing a decided opinion, I can adduce better proof. Mr. *Glover*, son of the author of "Leonidas," and whom to name, is sufficient to stamp the authenticity of all that he asserts; assured me only a short time ago, in answer to my enquiries on the subject, that "he had not the least reason to suppose, or to believe, that his father composed the letters of Junius:" an admission far outweighing any real or fancied similarity between those writers. Still more recent attempts have been made in favour of a foreigner, *De Lolme*; but, however speciously supported on some points, they rest on no solid foundation.

During many years of my life, notwithstanding the severity with which *Wedderburn* is treated by "Junius," I nourished a strong belief, approaching to conviction, that the late Earl of Rosslyn, then Mr. *Wedderburn*, was himself the author of those Letters. His abilities were eminent, his opportunities of information great; and his political connexions between January, 1769, and January, 1772, the two extreme periods of the appearance of the compositions in question, favour the conjecture. Though Churchill calls *Wedderburn*.

"A pert, prim prater of the northern race,"

his talents of every kind entitled him to high admiration; and he particularly possessed the legal, jurisprudential, as well as parliamentary knowledge, lavishly exhibited in various parts of "Junius." I have heard men assert, who

were entitled to respect and credit, that they had seen several of the originals, in the possession of Woodfall; and that they recognised the hand-writing to be that of Mrs. Wedderburn, his first wife, with which manual character they were perfectly acquainted. If this fact indeed were to be admitted, it might seem decisive: but, such assertions, however apparently well sustained, are frequently made on erroneous or mistaken foundations. Perhaps I ought to add, that the persons in question, were natives of Scotland; and national vanity or partiality might mislead their judgment on such a point.

All circumstances fully weighed, my own conviction is, that the letters of "Junius" were written by the Right Honourable *William Gerard Hamilton*; commonly designated by the nick-name of "Single Speech Hamilton," from the report, generally, though falsely circulated, that he never opened his mouth more than once in the English Parliament. He was during many years, chancellor of the exchequer in Ireland, and likewise a member of the British House of Commons, while I sat in it: but I had not the honour of his acquaintance; and my opinion is founded on the general prevailing sentiment of those persons, who, from their situation, rank, and means of information, are entitled to almost implicit belief. Throughout the various companies, in which, from 1775, down to the present time, I have heard this mysterious question agitated, the great majority concurred in giving to *Hamilton* the merit of composing the letters under examination. Various noblemen or gentlemen, who lived on terms of intimate friendship, and of almost daily intercourse with him, during the period of their appearance or publication; in particular, Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, and the late Earl of Clermont; having protested in my hearing, that they traced or recollected in Junius's Letters, the "*ipsissima verba*," the precise words and expressions of Hamilton, which had recently fallen from his lips in conversation. His pen is universally admitted to have been most elegant, classical, correct, and nervous. This opinion, nevertheless, by no means amounts to

demonstration, or approaches to certainty; and it is possible, that as the secret has not been divulged from authority, during the lapse of so many years, posterity may never attain to any absolute proof upon the subject, and must rest satisfied with conjecture.

If "Junius" could be supposed still alive, obvious motives for his concealing himself, drawn from the strongest principles of human action, will suggest themselves to every man's mind. On the other hand, if he be no more, what reasons sufficiently powerful can be produced, to account for the voluntary renunciation of that posthumous fame, which after his decease might have been reclaimed, without apprehension of any injurious consequences to himself? This argument or consideration, long induced me to suppose that "Junius" must be living; and that his death, whenever it took place, would infallibly remove the veil which conceals his name. On more mature reflection, nevertheless, very strong causes for continuing to preserve his incognito beyond the grave, may present themselves. If he left behind him lineal representatives, he might dread exposing them to the hereditary animosity of some of those, whom he designates as "the worst, and the most powerful men in this country." Even should he have left no descendants, it is possible that he might dislike the comparison between his actions and his writings, which must have been involuntarily made by mankind. If, for instance, it would have been proved that he accepted an office, a pension, or a peerage, from the sovereign and the minister whom he had recently accused as enemies to their country, or as having betrayed its interests;—would not the moral aversion or contempt, excited towards his memory by such a disclosure, having overbalanced the meed of literary fame obtained from the labours of his pen? Should we admit the validity of his reasoning, we shall be led to infer, that "Junius" may remain as unknown to posterity, a century hence, as he continues to be now in 1815.

There is still another circumstance applicable to the present times, which did not exist when *Burnet*, or *Bul-*

strode, or *Reresby*, wrote their "Memoirs;" and which fact must be supposed to have had its due operation on "Junius." Between 1660 and 1714, a period of little more than fifty years, three families in succession reigned over this country: whereas from 1760, down to 1814, only one prince has occupied the throne, who still lives, though we lament that he no longer reigns. Under William the Third, who had expelled his father-in-law, and who could not feel any esteem for Charles the Second; "Junius," had he then flourished, and had levelled his shafts against those kings, might have unmasked, and boldly avowed his writings. When the two Houses of Nassau, or of Stuart, no longer swayed the sceptre, and when George the First was called to the crown; the severest attacks made on the preceding sovereigns or ministers, could have excited only a feeble degree of resentment, if they did not even give rise to opposite emotions. But, the case is widely different with respect to "Junius," and might justly challenge from him another line of conduct. Not only the same family, but the same individual, remains, at least nominally, king. And that individual, whatever errors of judgment he may have committed, or however unpopular he was, almost from the period of his accession down to 1783, has been since that time embalmed in the affections of his people. I must leave the degree of solidity contained in these observations, to the decision of every man's judgment, as elucidatory or explanatory of the question respecting "Junius."*

In addition to so many *domestic* causes which weakened the veneration felt towards the king, two *foreign* events had likewise occurred, productive of national dissatisfaction. The first arose from the line of policy, or rather of conduct, adopted by Great Britain relative to Corsica. That island, which in later times has attained a degree of odious celebrity, by giving birth to a man, whose vast mili-

tary talents, and insatiable ambition, aided by the progress of the French revolution, enabled him to overturn and to trample under his feet, during many years, the ancient system of Europe: was, after a long series of insurrections against the Genoese government, ultimately transferred by Genoa to France. Choiseul, a minister of an elevated mind, and of ambitious designs; anxious to raise the French name, as well as the reputation of Louis the Fifteenth, from the state of humiliation into which both were fallen by the ill success of the preceding war; undertook, and at length effected, the reduction of Corsica. It may however be justly questioned, whether the conquest has really augmented the strength or resources of France. But, the generosity characteristic of the English nation, the sympathy felt towards a race of brave, oppressed, and unfortunate islanders, contending for freedom; when added to the jealous susceptibility natural to a state, always apprehensive of the aggrandizement of its rival;—these feelings or political opinions, produced a powerful effect on the public mind. They were sustained by the publications, calculated to rouse the country from its apathy or indifference to the fate of Corsica. Pascal Paoli, chief of the insurgents, was depicted in them, as another Gustavus Vasa, or William Tell, struggling against tyranny and oppression: while the English ministry, it was said, pusillanimously looked on, regardless of the event, and inattentive to so important an accession of power acquired by our natural enemy.

Scarcely had the impression made by the *French* conquest of Corsica ceased to operate, and sunk into a degree of oblivion, when another occurrence awakened and exasperated the nation, against the *Spanish* branch of the House of Bourbon. The immediate cause of this dispute arose from the possession taken of the Falkland Islands by England; but, the court of Madrid had always evaded or refused payment of the sum due for the ransom of Manilla. Never, perhaps, was any object in itself, abstractedly considered, less valuable, nor less worthy of public attention, than the Falkland Islands: yet, the manner in which Spain acted

* Since I wrote the preceding observations, a perusal of the work lately published, denominated "The Identity of Junius with a distinguished living Character established," leaves little or no doubt on my mind, that those celebrated productions are to be attributed to Sir Philip Francis.

on the occasion, displayed so much arrogance, as to compromise the honour of the British crown, and to demand a reparation no less public than the affront. The islands in question, situated in a most inclement latitude, in the other hemisphere, not far removed from Cape Horn; abandoned by nature to seals and to wild fowl; scarcely covered with a scanty vegetation; could hardly merit from their intrinsic consequence, commercial or political, that any blood should be spilt in order to acquire, or to retain, their possession. But the jealous policy with which the old Spanish government always beheld even the slightest approach of any foreign power towards that vast continent of South America, over which, though they could neither colonize, nor subject it, they nevertheless claimed a dominion; impelled the court of Madrid to commence its operations, in a manner no less hostile than insulting to us. An English frigate was detained in the harbour of Port Egmont by force. It must be owned, that the vigour, or rather audacity of such a proceeding, could scarcely have been exceeded by Cardinal Alberoni himself, when he presided in the Spanish counsels, under Philip the Fifth. The act was indeed only committed ostensibly by an individual, Buccarelli, who commanded the forces of Charles the Third in that quarter of the globe: but the government avowed, justified, and supported him.

Lord North, on whom had recently devolved the first place in administration; while he appeared deeply to feel the indignity offered to his sovereign, manifested likewise a disposition to resent it in the most effectual manner. Neither the state of the English navy, nor the preparations made in our ports for the immediate equipment of a powerful fleet, were said, however, to be such as the exigency obviously demanded, and the public honour unquestionably required. A mitigated compromise, by which Spain, though she consented to cede the *possession* of Falkland Islands to Great Britain, yet refused to admit or recognise our *right* to them; was, after long discussions, accepted by ministers. It prevented a war, but it gave no general satisfaction;

more especially, as any mention of the Manilla ransom was studiously omitted in the convention. Assuredly, the moment seemed favourable to have imposed almost any conditions on the Spanish crown. Louis the Fifteenth, sinking in years, and still more sunk in the general estimation of his subjects; disgusted at the ill success of the former war, and determined not to engage again in hostilities against England; having dismissed the Duke de Choiseul from office, and lost to every sense of public duty, or national glory; would, it was well known, have disregarded "the family compact," and would have abandoned the other branch of the House of Bourbon in the contest.

But, Lord North, who preferred pacific measures; besides the ordinary modes of negotiation, had recourse to expedients not usually adopted, in order to avert a rupture. The late Sir William Gordon, whom I well knew, and who at that time filled the post of British envoy at the court of Brussels, was selected by ministers, to undertake the commission of preventing a war. For this purpose, he received private instructions to repair, in the most secret but expeditious manner, to Paris; and there to use every possible exertion for prevailing on Louis the Fifteenth, and the new first minister, the Duke d'Aguillon, to compel the Spanish court to accommodate the points in dispute. Gordon, who found in the French sovereign and his cabinet, the warmest disposition to preserve peace, succeeded completely in the object of his mission. He told me, that as a recompense for his service, he received from Lord North, a pension of three hundred pounds a year; and from his majesty, the further sum of one thousand pounds, as a present; but, the convention by which peace was made, excited universal disapprobation; and afforded, to the pen of "Junius," an occasion which he did not lose, of pointing the public censure with inconceivable severity against the king himself personally, no less than against the administration.

Even after the interval of four years, which elapsed between the termination of this dispute, and the commencement of the American rebellion; though the

nation enjoyed profound peace ; together with all the advantages of a flourishing commerce, augmenting opulence, and progressive prosperity, yet the sovereign was by no means popular. New sources of discontent, and imaginary or doubtful subjects of complaint, were ingeniously discovered. Lord Bute had, indeed, disappeared from the theatre of public life ; and the Princess Dowager of Wales, whose supposed influence over her son, rendered her always an object of attack, was no more. She expired in 1772, of a most painful disease, which she supported with uncommon firmness. But, other names and figures succeeded to their pretended influence behind the curtain of state. *Bradshaw*, surnamed "the cream-coloured parasite, and *Dyson*, gave place to the superior ascendancy of *Jenkinson*, who was accused of directing, unseen, the resolutions of the cabinet, and of possessing the interior secret, as well as confidence, of the crown. A prince, distinguished by almost every domestic virtue, animated by the noblest intentions, and by the warmest affection for his people, was represented as despotic, inflexible, vindictive, and disposed to govern by unconstitutional means or engines. His very pleasures, his tastes, and his private recreations, were traduced or satirized, as bearing the same stamp and impression. Poetry lent her aid to expose these personal weaknesses, if such they were, to public animadversion or ridicule. The "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers" (commonly, though perhaps erroneously attributed to one of the finest poetic writers of the period, Mason) ; rivalled "Junius" in delicacy of invective, in its insulting irony, and in the severity of its imputations. Such appeared to be the state of public opinion, and such the prejudices generally entertained against the king, throughout the nation, at the period when, in the summer of 1775, hostilities began on the American continent.

That George the Third, from a very early period of his reign, had imbibed a deeply rooted opinion of the parliamentary right inherent in the mother country, to tax her American colonies, and of the practicability, or rather the facility,

of the attempt, if made ; no well-informed man can entertain a doubt. I have been assured by a nobleman now alive, that as early as 1764, his majesty, conversing with Mr. George Grenville, then first minister, on the subject of the finances, which, after the close of the triumphant "Seven Years War," demanded economy, no less than ability, to re-establish ; mentioned to him as one great pecuniary resource, the measure of taxing America. Mr. Grenville replied, that he had frequently revolved, and thoroughly considered the proposition, which he believed to be not only difficult, but impracticable ; and pregnant, if undertaken, with the most alarming consequences to the sovereign himself. These apprehensions, far, however, from intimidating or discouraging the king, made no impression on his mind ; and in a subsequent conversation with the same minister, his majesty gave him plainly to understand, that if he wanted either nerves or inclination to make the attempt, others could be found who were ready to undertake it. The words produced their full effect upon the person to whom they were addressed ; and Mr. Grenville preferred endeavouring to realize the experiment, however hazardous he might esteem it, rather than allow it to be committed to other hands. It failed at that time, but was revived ten years later, with more serious national results, under Lord North's administration.

I have always considered the *principle* upon which that war commenced, and peculiarly as affecting the king, to have been not only defensible, but meritorious. It was not a war of prerogative, but a contest undertaken for maintaining the right of parliament to impose taxes on British America. If George the Third would have separated the interests of his crown, from those of the legislature, he might have made advantageous terms with his trans-Atlantic subjects : but he disdained any compromise by which he must have dissevered himself from his parliament. Nor have I ever esteemed the political and military conductors of the American revolution, as other than successful rebels of unquestionable courage, constancy, and ability ; whatever eulogiums were con-

ferred on them in the House of Commons, by Fox and Burke. I well know that the names of Franklin and of Washington have been consecrated by a very numerous part of the inhabitants of Great Britain. The former, if considered as a natural philosopher, a philanthropist, and a man of genius, doubtless may lay claim to universal esteem. Nor are the abstract pretensions of Washington less conspicuous, when contemplated as a general, and a citizen of America. In both capacities he may rank with Cincinnatus, or with the younger Cato. But, in the estimation of all who regard the parliamentary supremacy of the mother country over colonies, which had been not merely planted, but likewise preserved, by the expenditure of British blood and treasure, as constituting an immutable principle; a sovereign who would not have maintained that supremacy, must have been unworthy of the sceptre.

The whole life of William the Third, from his attainment of manhood, down to the last moments of his existence, was passed in a continual struggle to preserve the liberties of his own country, or those of England, against arbitrary power. His name will ever be connected with constitutional freedom, and as such, is cherished in our remembrance. But, does any person suppose, that if William had reigned over the British Isles, at the period of the American rebellion; whatever love of civil liberty might animate him as a man, he would on that account have relinquished the rights of his parliament and his crown? Or that he would have tamely acquiesced in the refusal of his American subjects, to contribute, by indirect taxation, to the general wants of the empire? Those who venture to form such a conclusion, must, as it seems to me, have very imperfectly studied the character, or appreciated the actions, of that illustrious prince.

The *wisdom* and *policy* of the American war, may perhaps appear more doubtful. The attempt in the first instance to tax, and afterwards to reduce by force, a vast continent, separated from Great Britain by an immense ocean, inhabited by a people who were individually indebted many millions to the mo-

ther country, ardent for emancipation, and sufficiently unanimous in their resistance to the parent state, to be able to call out into action nearly all the persons capable of bearing arms; — such an experiment, even, if speculatively considered, would doubtless have impressed any wise statesman, as hazardous in itself, and of very uncertain issue. In the case before us, all these impediments acquired additional strength, from other concurring circumstances. A large proportion of society here at home, regarded the American rebellion with favourable eyes, and secretly wished success to the cause; because they dreaded lest the British constitution itself would not long survive the increase of power and influence, that the crown must necessarily derive from the subjugation of the colonies beyond the Atlantic. In both Houses of Parliament, a numerous, active, and increasing party openly maintained and justified the insurrection, rejoiced in their triumphs, and reprobated in theory, no less than in practice, the attempt to subjugate the revolted states. Even those who did not approve such political principles, yet saw in the war, if it should prove unsuccessful, a means of overturning the administration.

The inability of Great Britain to levy and to send from her own population, a military force sufficiently numerous for reducing to obedience so many provinces, extending from the frontiers of Canada, to the borders of Florida; compelled the government to obtain additional troops, by application to various of the German powers. From the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel in particular, who had married a daughter of George the Second, many thousands were procured. These stipendiaries, though perhaps not more justly objects of moral or political condemnation, than were the Swiss and Grison regiments permanently retained in the service of France, or the Scotch corps then serving in the pay of Holland; yet increased the popular cry, and furnished to the opposition, subjects of obloquy, or of declamation. That France must, sooner or later, interfere in favour of the Americans, became likewise obvious; because the French ministry, listening only to the narrow sugges-

tions of national rivalry, did not, or would not perceive, that it could never be the wise policy of a despotic government, to aid the cause of revolt, by sending forces out of the country, to imbibe principles of freedom and resistance among rebels. It is an unquestionable fact, that the late unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth possessed enlargement of mind and sound discernment sufficient to feel this truth. He even objected strongly to the policy of detaching French troops to the assistance of Washington; and he was only overruled in his opposition to the measure, by his deference for the counsels of Maurepas and Vergennes. France has since dearly paid, under Robespierre and Bonaparte, for her deviation from the dictates of wisdom, as well as of magnanimity, in thus supporting insurrection.

It is, however, in the *conduct* of that unfortunate contest, that we must principally seek for the cause of its ill success. Near three years elapsed from the time of its commencement, before the court of Versailles ventured openly to interpose as an enemy. But, the *Howes* appear to have been either lukewarm, or remiss, or negligent, or incapable. Lord North's selection of those two commanders, for the purpose of subjecting America, excited, at the time, just condemnation; however brave, able, or meritorious, they might individually be esteemed as professional men. Their ardour in the cause itself was doubted; and still more questionable was their attachment to the administration. Never, perhaps, in the history of modern war, has an army, or a fleet, been more profusely supplied with every requisite for brilliant and efficient service, than were the troops and ships sent out by Lord North's cabinet in 1776, across the Atlantic. But, the efforts abroad, did not correspond with the exertions made at home. The energy and activity of a *Wellington*, never animated that torpid mass. Neither vigilance, enterprise, nor co-operation, characterized the campaigns of 1776 and 1777. Dissipation, play, and relaxation of discipline, found their way into the British camp. New York became another *Capua*, though the genius and resources of *Hannibal* were not displayed by Sir William Howe. The defeat at Trenton, which was criti-

cally unfortunate, rescued the Congress from the lowest state of depression. After Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga, little rational probability of success remained; and when Clinton succeeded to the command of the army at New York, by the recall of Sir William Howe, the French were on the point of declaring in favour of the Americans. The loyalty and courage of Sir Henry Clinton were besides more distinguished, than were his military talents. Even the British troops, engaged in a species of civil war, did not manifest the same eagerness or alacrity, as when opposed to a foreign enemy, though they displayed in every engagement their accustomed steadiness and valour. The service itself, from the nature of the country, became severe, painful, and discouraging. Lakes, swamps, morasses, and almost impenetrable forests, presented, at every step, obstacles not easily overcome by the bravest soldiers. And though the scene of hostilities was successively shifted, from Boston to New York; thence to the banks of the Chesapeake and the Delaware; finally, to the southern and central provinces of Carolina and Virginia; yet the results, however promising they might be at the commencement, proved always ultimately abortive. We have recently witnessed similar consequences flowing from nearly the same causes, during the progress of our second contest with America.

At home, a gradual and increasing discontent overspread the kingdom, pervaded all classes, and seemed to menace the administration with the effects of popular, or national resentment. The navy, divided into parties, no longer blocked the enemies ports, or carried victory wherever it appeared, as it had done in the commencement of his majesty's reign. Our distant possessions, unprotected by superior fleets, fell into the hands of France or Spain. Even our commerce were intercepted, captured, and greatly diminished. Each year seemed to produce new foreign adversaries, and to augment the public embarrassments or distress. Ministers who were neither vigorous, nor fortunate, nor popular, holding even their offices by a precarious tenure, inspired no confidence in their measures. The

opposition, though diminished by the exertions which government had made to secure a majority in the lower house, on the convocation of a new parliament, were numerous, confident, able, and indefatigable. They saw, or believed they saw, the object of their grasp, at no great distance. Futurity presented to all men, a most discouraging prospect; and peace appeared to be not only distant, but unattainable, except by such sacrifices of national revenue, territory, and honour, as could not be contemplated without a degree of dismay. America might be considered as lost to Great Britain; while our possessions in the East Indies seemed to be menaced with total subversion. Those who remember the period to which I allude, will not think the colours of this description either heightened or overcharged. At no moment of the revolutionary war which we almost unintermittingly sustained against the French, from 1793 to 1814; neither in 1797, during the mutiny in the navy; nor in 1799, after the unsuccessful expedition to the Helder; nor in 1805, subsequent to the battle of Austerlitz; nor in 1806, when the Prussian monarchy fell at Auerstadt; nor in 1807, at the peace of Tilsit; nor when Sir John Moore was compelled, early in 1809, to re-embark at Corunna, and the whole Pyrenean peninsula seemed to lie prostrate at the fleet of its Corsican master:—though each of these æras unquestionably presents images of great national depression, did a deeper despondency prevail among all ranks of society, than existed towards the close of the American contest, as the administration of Lord North drew to its termination.

In the midst of so universal a dejection, the king remained altogether unmoved. Neither defeats, nor difficulties, nor the number of his foreign enemies, nor domestic opposition, unhinged his mind, or shook his resolution. Convinced that he could not abandon the struggle in which he was engaged, however arduous or doubtful might be the result, without renouncing his own birth-right, the interests of his crown, the supremacy of parliament, and the best portion of the British empire; he never vacillated, nor showed, for a single moment, any dispo-

sition to dismiss his ministers. Whatever irresolution, difference of opinion, or apprehension, might pervade the cabinet itself, at certain moments, none of these sentiments agitated the sovereign. He only desired to abide the issue, and to maintain the contest. It is perhaps for posterity to decide on the degree of approbation or of blame, political and moral, which such a character and conduct, under such circumstances, may justly challenge: but, even if we should incline to censure, or to condemn, we cannot help in some measure respecting and admiring it. As, however, his majesty's opinions and wishes were universally known or understood throughout the country, a proportionate degree of unpopularity fell personally on him; and he was regarded as the vital principle which animated, sustained, and propelled the administration. When we consider this fact, in addition to all the preceding statements given of his measures since he acceded to the throne; we shall no longer wonder, that in defiance of so many claims to the affectionate veneration of his people, he was nevertheless, at this period of his reign, by no means an object of general partiality or attachment.

Lord North, who had already occupied the post of first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, during eleven years, was then in the full vigour of his faculties, having nearly accomplished the forty-ninth year of his age. His head and face exceedingly reminded the beholder, of the portraits of Pope Leo the Tenth. In his person he was of the middle size, heavy, large, and much inclined to corpulency. There appeared in the cast and formation of his countenance, nay even in his manner, so strong a resemblance to the royal family of England, that it was difficult not to perceive it. Like them, he had a fair complexion, regular features, light hair, with bushy eyebrows, and grey eyes, rather prominent in his head. His face might be indeed esteemed a caricature of the king; and those who remembered the intimacy which subsisted between Frederic, the late Prince of Wales, and the Earl, as well as Countess of Guildford, Lord North's father and mother; a circumstance to which allu-

sion has already been made; found no difficulty in accounting, though perhaps very unjustly, for that similarity. He possessed an advantage, considered in his ministerial capacity, which neither of his two immediate predecessors, the Marquis of Rockingham, or the Duke of Grafton, could boast; and, in which, his three immediate successors in office, Lord Rockingham, Lord Shelburne, and the Duke of Portland, were equally deficient. I mean, that being, not a member of the House of Peers, but a commoner, he had attained in the course of years, that intimate knowledge of the lower house, its formation, composition, and the modes of conducting or influencing it as a body, which nothing can confer, except long habits of debate, and the necessity of daily personal attendance. His natural affability rendered him besides so accessible, and the communicativeness of his temper inclined him so much to conversation, that every member of the house found a facility in becoming known to him. Never indeed was a first minister less intrenched within the forms of his official situation. He seemed, on the contrary, always happy to throw aside his public character, and to relapse into an individual.

His tongue being rather too large for his mouth, rendered his articulation somewhat thick, though not at all indistinct. It is to this peculiarity or defect in his enunciation, that "Junius" alludes in one of his Letters, written in January, 1770, when he says, after mentioning the Duke of Grafton's resignation, "The palm of ministerial firmness is now transferred to Lord North. He tells us so, himself, with the plenitude of the *ore rotundo*." He did not, however, bedew his hearers while addressing his discourse to them, as Burnet tells us, the Duke of Lauderdale, so well known under Charles the Second's reign, always did, in consequence of the faulty conformation of his tongue. In parliament, the deficiency of Lord North's sight was productive to him of many inconveniences. For, even at the distance of a few feet, he saw very imperfectly; and across the house, he was unable to distinguish persons with any degree of certainty or accuracy. In speaking, walking, and every motion, it

is not enough to say that he wanted grace: he was to the last degree awkward. It can hardly obtain belief, that in a full House of Commons, he took off, on the point of his sword, the wig of Mr. Welbore Ellis, and carried it a considerable way across the floor, without ever suspecting, or perceiving it. The fact happened in this manner. Mr. Ellis, who was then treasurer of the navy, and well advanced towards his seventieth year, always sat at the lowest corner of the treasury bench, a few feet removed from Lord North. The latter, having occasion to go down the house, previously laid his hand on his sword, holding the chafe of the scabbard forward, nearly in a horizontal direction. Mr. Ellis, stooping at the same instant that the first minister rose, the point of the scabbard came exactly in contact with the treasurer of the navy's wig, which it completely took off, and bore away. The accident, however ludicrous, was wholly unseen by Lord North, who received the first intimation of it, from the involuntary bursts of laughter that it occasioned in every quarter of the house. Mr. Ellis, however, without altering a muscle of his countenance, and preserving the most perfect gravity in the midst of the general convulsion; having received back his wig, re-adjusted it to his head, and waited patiently till the house had recovered from the effect of so extraordinary, as well as ridiculous an occurrence.

In addition to his defect of sight, Lord North was subject likewise to a constitutional somnolency, which neither the animated declamations of Fox, nor the pathetic invocations of Burke, nor the hoarse menaces of Barré, could always prevent. It attacked him even on the treasury bench, sometimes with irresistible force. Nor was he altogether exempt from its influence when in private society. Having called on a lady of condition, one evening, the charms of whose person and conversation were universally acknowledged at the time of which I am writing, but, whom I forbear to name, he found her engaged in a violent altercation with her sister-in-law. Lord North, with his characteristic good humour, attempted to interpose his mediation, and to accommodate the quarrel:

but he found this negotiation more difficult than that of the Falkland Islands, and they were not to be pacified without recurring to legal assistance. He consented therefore to wait, till the lady of the house should return from her solicitor's chambers in Lincoln's Inn, which she promised to do without delay. Seating himself in an arm-chair before the fire, he soon fell into a profound sleep, from which he was not awakened by the entrance of one of the maid servants; who, seeing a corpulent man, with a blue ribband across his breast, asleep in her mistress's drawing room, and being unacquainted with the first minister's person, ran down into the kitchen, to give the alarm. Yet in defiance of all these physical infirmities, whenever he rose to reply in the House of Commons, he displayed no want of recollection, presence of mind, or accuracy. He seldom, or never, took notes; trusting to his memory for retaining the principal facts which occurred during the preceding discussion. Sir Grey Cooper, however, who commonly sat on his left hand, supplied on particular occasions that deficiency.

Lord North was powerful, able, and fluent in debate; sometimes repelling the charges made against him, with solid argument; but, still more frequently eluding or blunting the weapons of his antagonists, by the force of wit and humour. Fox, conscious of the first minister's superiority in exciting a laugh, and irritated at being often the object of his talent for ridicule, more than once endeavoured to silence him by severity of animadversion. I remember, soon after I came into parliament, towards the close of 1780, during the debate which arose upon Sir Hugh Palliser's nomination to the government of Greenwich Hospital; Lord North having exhibited his talents in that line of defence, Fox exclaimed, "there may be ingenuity, and there doubtless is wit in the noble lord's reply, but there is no judgment. A joke constitutes a poor consolation for so many gallant admirals as have been forced out of the service. The prime minister is satisfied if he can only raise a laugh. He hopes that if the opposers of his measures cannot approve his reasoning, they may still be com-

pelled to say, '*O quam belle concionaris!*'" Mr. Thomas Townsend, alluding about the same time, in the House of Commons, to Lord North's unequalled powers of that nature; expressed his astonishment at the facility with which, while the empire was convulsed in every quarter, the first lord of the treasury could summon to his aid, all the weapons of wit and levity. "Happen what will," said he, "the noble lord is ready with his joke. Amidst the calamities of the war, and the ruin of the country, while the state of public affairs renders every other person serious, he is prepared to treat events the most distressing, as subjects of merriment, of gaiety, and of repartee! Such is his luxuriant fancy, and sportive elasticity of character." These observations, however acrimonious, were not destitute of truth; but it was impossible to resist the effect of Lord North's talents for ridicule. They never forsook him; not even on the night of the seventh of June, 1780, when London was blazing round him; nor on the 18th of March, 1782, only forty-eight hours before he resigned, when he jested in the House of Commons on the tax which he meant to impose upon hair-dressers:—such was the formation of his mind. Sir Thomas More, chancellor under Henry the Eighth, one of the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous ministers that England ever saw, displayed the same facetiousness throughout every stage of his life, and exhibited it even on the scaffold, during his last moments.

Lord North rarely rose to sublimity, though he possessed vast facility and command of language. If necessary, he could speak for a long time, apparently with great pathos, and yet disclose no important fact, nor reveal any secret. I have heard Fox himself, while inveighing in the strongest manner against Lord North, yet bear a sort of reluctant testimony to his ability in this respect. When the subject of opening a treaty with the American colonies was agitated in the House of Commons, towards the conclusion of the session of 1781, the first minister having opposed, on general grounds, the motion brought forward by opposition, Fox, in the course of a long and very animated

speech, observed, "The noble lord prefers speaking indefinitely on the present question. It is frequently inconvenient for him to answer directly to matters of fact, and he therefore amuses parliament with general ideas or propositions. For, there exists, not within these walls, nor in the kingdom, a more complete master of language than the chancellor of the exchequer, nor one who can more plausibly discourse on any subject." The sincerity, as well as the justice of this recognition, could admit of no dispute. Then adverting to Lord George Germain's well known fair or unguarded mode of expression, Fox added, "The noble lord who sits near the first lord of the treasury, is less accustomed to entertain his audience with general speeches, and commonly comes directly to the fact." An unalterable suavity and equality of temper, which was natural to Lord North, enabled him to sustain, unmoved, the bitter sarcasms and severe accusations, levelled at him from the opposition benches. They always seemed to sink into him, like a cannon ball into a wool sack. Sometimes, the coarse invectives of Alderman Sawbridge, or the fiery sallies of George Byng, roused him from his seeming apathy; and effected the object, which the delicate irony, or laboured attacks of more able adversaries, had failed to produce. Once, and only once, during the time that I sat in parliament, I witnessed his rising to a pitch of the most generous indignation. Barré attracted this storm on himself, by the reproaches which he made the first minister, for oppressing the people with taxes; or as he coarsely termed it, "scourging them to the last drop of their blood:" reproaches, equally uncalled for by the occasion, as they were delivered with insulting asperity of language.

The incident happened after the close of that memorable debate, when General Conway, on the 22d of February, 1782, may be said to have terminated the American war; administration only carrying the question by a single vote. Lord North, alluding to this recent triumph of the opposition, said in reply to Barré, that "He presumed the division of that evening had inflamed the

colonel's valour to such intemperate abuse," which he qualified with the epithets of "insolent and brutal." I scarcely ever recollect a scene of greater tumult and general disorder, than took place on his pronouncing the above words. The first minister had time, during the uproar and cries of *order*, to recollect himself; and as soon as silence was in some measure restored, he apologised to the house for his indiscretion; adding in a manner the most good humoured, "To be sure, Mr. Speaker, it was wrong in me, who have been so long accustomed to parliamentary abuse, to be irritated at any expressions. I can bear, I believe, as much as any man; and I am persuaded, the house will give me credit, when I repeat that I support abuse as patiently as any individual." Several of the opposition members, among whom were Colonel Barré's colleague, Dunning, and Mr. William Pitt; insisting that a personal excuse or apology was due to Barré himself, as well as to the house, Lord North submitted to the expressed pleasure of the assembly. "But, the colonel, "*cui lumen ademptum*," by no means manifested the same suavity and complacency in accepting, which the chancellor of the exchequer had exhibited in making, the required apology. Getting up, he began a speech of considerable length, by observing that "Though he in general differed upon political points with the noble lord, and despised him as a minister, yet as a private gentleman, he esteemed Lord North." He then proceeded to demonstrate that every member possessed a right to use with impunity, the most severe epithets towards a public functionary, the servant of the state, though that right was not reciprocal. He would even have again recapitulated the particulars of the whole transaction, if *Cornwall* had not very properly interposed from the chair, and imposed silence on him. Thus terminated the business. Pitt did not then foresee that a day would arrive, when he should stand precisely in the predicament of Lord North. No doubt, Pitt and Tierney, when they met on Putney Common in 1798, exchanged shots for less provocation: but, a duel between

Lord North and Barré, would have excited a sort of ridicule; the former seeing very imperfectly with both eyes, and the latter possessing only one defective eye. Besides, the emotions of anger and resentment appeared to be foreign to Lord North's nature, and as if only put on occasionally in order to serve a particular purpose. He was indeed incapable of retaining enmity, though he felt, and sometimes expressed contempt for those individuals, who abandoned him from mean and mercenary motives. The best proof of his placability was exhibited by himself, several years afterwards, accompanied with that wit and pleasantry which characterised him on every occasion. Barré and he meeting on the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells, where great civilities took place between them; "Colonel," said Lord North, "notwithstanding all that may have passed formerly in parliament, when we were on different sides, I am persuaded that there are not two men in the kingdom, who would now be more happy to see each other." They were both at that time totally deprived of sight, and led about by their attendants.

Baited, harassed, and worried as he always was in parliament, during the latter years of his administration, he never manifested any impatience for the termination of the session: on the contrary, doubts were entertained among those persons who knew him best, whether he did not derive a gratification from keeping the House of Commons sitting. That assembly presented in fact a theatre on which he acted the first personage, where he attracted almost all attention, and where his abilities rendered him hardly less conspicuous, than his ministerial situation. In opening *the budget*, he was esteemed peculiarly lucid, clear, and able. On that account it constituted a day of triumph to his friends and supporters, who exulted in the talent which he displayed, whenever he exhibited the state of the national finances, or imposed new pecuniary burthens. I was twice present at his performance of this arduous task; first, in 1781, and afterwards, in the following year, when he executed it for the last time. Each performance appeared

to me, very deserving of the encomiums lavished on it; and if compared with the incapable manner in which *the budget* was opened by his successor, Lord John Cavendish, when he was chancellor of the exchequer in 1783, I still continue of the same opinion. But Lord North could sustain no competition with the late Mr. Pitt, who on those, as on all other occasions, manifested a perspicuity, eloquence, recollection, and talent, altogether wonderful; which carried the audience along with him in every arithmetical statement, left no calculation obscure or ambiguous, and impressed the house at its close with tumultuous admiration.

Lord North could descend without effort, I might say, with ease and dignity, from the highest offices of his public situation in the House of Commons, to the lowest duties of a private member. In the spring of the year 1781, when "the Secret Committee for enquiring into the Causes of the War in the Carnatic," was appointed by ballot, I was named one of the scrutineers, to examine the names of the persons chosen to compose it. The house being about to break up, we were standing round the table, when some voices called out the name of Lord North for a scrutineer. Far from declining to engage in such an occupation, which he might easily have done, on account of his official business and employments, he instantly repaired with the members nominated, to one of the committee rooms. We sat till a late hour before the scrutiny was finished, and dined together up stairs. And if he made the worst scrutineer, he was certainly the pleasantest and best companion, during the whole time. He possessed a classic mind, full of information, and always enlivened by wit, as well as sweetened by good humour. When young, he had travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and he knew the continent well: he spoke French with facility, and was equally versed in the great writings of antiquity. It was impossible to experience dulness in his society. Even during the last years of his life, when nearly or totally blind, and labouring under many infirmities; yet his equanimity of temper never forsook him, nor even his gaiety, and

powers of conversation. I have frequently seen him display the utmost cheerfulness, under those circumstances so trying to human nature.

As a statesman, his enemies charged him with irresolution : but he might rather be taxed with indolence and procrastination, than with want of decision. He naturally loved to postpone, though when it became necessary to resolve, he could abide firmly by his determination. Never had any minister purer hands, nor manifested less rapacity. In fact, he amassed no wealth, after an administration of twelve years. When he quitted office, his circumstances were by no means opulent, and he had a numerous family. I well remember that when Powis accused him (in the course of that memorable speech which made so deep an impression on the house pronounced in December, 1781), of insensibility to the calamities of the country, and of clinging to employment, from unworthy motives of an interested or pecuniary nature ; Lord North repelled the imputation with the calmness and dignity of conscious integrity. "I do not desire," said he, "to make any affected display of my personal purity or disinterestedness. I will, however, declare, that with respect to my income, I would most cheerfully give it all ; not only the part which I derive from the public purse, but my own private fortune, if I could thereby accelerate an honourable, speedy, and advantageous peace!" There was not, I believe, a man on the opposite side of the house, without even excepting George Byng or Sawbridge, though both were bitter enemies to the minister, who doubted either his sincerity or his veracity. His adversaries reproached him likewise, that though incapable of personally descending to unworthy means of enriching himself, he allowed speculations or abuses to be practised by those employed under him. Sawbridge, when speaking in his place, as a member of parliament, alluding to this accusation, exclaimed with Cato,

"Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country!"

A similar charge was made against

the late Mr. Pitt, who, after having been first minister during almost his whole life, left only debts behind him. But it never entered into any man's mind, however inimical he might be, to accuse either Lord North or Mr. Pitt, of making undue purchases in the public funds, or of turning their ministerial information to private purposes of pecuniary emolument. They were known to be upright and disinterested. The great defect of Lord North's government arose from the easiness of his natural temper, which sometimes perhaps induced him to adopt or to defend measures that had not always the sanction of his judgment. Another, and perhaps a greater evil, arising from his facility and want of energy, was, that he did not, like the great Earl of Chatham, sufficiently coerce the other members of the cabinet ; each of whom, under Lord North, might be said to form a sort of independent department. They were in fact, rather his co-equals, than his subordinates, as they ought to have been ; and the public service often suffered, as I well know, from their want of union, or from their clashing interests, and private animosities. Dundas himself, while making the panegyric of his friend the first minister, yet avowed this constitutional defect in his formation of mind. It happened on the 12th of December, 1781, during one of the debates in the House of Commons previous to the termination of the American war. "The noble Lord in the blue ribband," said Dundas, "is actuated in all his measures by the most disinterested zeal for his country. He wants only one quality to render him a great and distinguished statesman : I mean, a more *despotic* and *commanding temper*." Burke affected to treat with contemptuous ridicule, these eulogiums of the lord advocate on the chancellor of the exchequer. "The splendour of the *noble* lord's public character and administration," observed he, "can only be equalled by the sincerity of the *learned* lord's praises." But, whatever motives might be imputed to Dundas, the fact was indisputable. Lord North excited affection, as well as respect ; and awakened admiration at his variety of talents and attainments. But he knew not how to inspire terror, like

the first Mr. Pitt ; of whom Wilkes says, that " the keen lightnings of his eye spoke the haughty, fiery soul, before his lips had pronounced a syllable." Even his son, the late first minister, though he wanted the features of the father, inherited no inconsiderable portion of " the lightnings of his eye."

Want of political courage cannot be justly attributed to Lord North. If we reflect that his administration equalled in duration, the aggregate period occupied by the five preceding ministers, namely, Mr. Pitt, Lord Bute, Mr. Grenville, Lord Rockingham, and the Duke of Grafton ; — and if we consider how critical, as well as perilous, were the times, particularly during the reverses of the American war, and throughout the riots of June, 1780, which last convulsions might have appalled the stoutest mind ; we shall not refuse him a just claim to the praise of ministerial firmness. Even his ultimate resignation in 1782, I am convinced, arose more from disgust and weariness, added to despair, than from personal fear, or from any defect of nerves. How well aware he was of the precarious tenure by which he held his power during the four or five last years of the American war, and how suddenly he might be compelled to quit his official residence in Downing street, may be inferred from a single circumstance. He had a house at the south east angle of Grosvenor Square, which from its situation in so elegant and fashionable a quarter of the town, would easily have found a permanent tenant. But, Lord North, conscious on how frail a basis his administration reposed, would never let it for a longer period than one year. In consequence of this principle, it annually changed its possessor ; and being frequently taken by newly married couples, it obtained the name of *Honey Moon Hall*. To the house of which I speak, Lord North repaired at the termination of his ministry, and continued to reside in it while inhabiting London, down to the time of his decease in 1792. I have often paid my respects to him there of evenings, between his last dismissal from employment in December, 1783, and the close of his life ; never without sentiments of admiration and respect. Though not

unguarded in private conversation, or in debate, he was careless in many respects, to a degree hardly credible. I have heard a member of his cabinet say, that it was dangerous to trust him with state papers, which he perpetually mislaid or forgot. A letter of the first political importance, addressed to him by the king, which he had lost ; after a long search, was found lying wide open in the water-closet. A strong and mutual affection subsisted between his majesty and him, as was natural, after the many heavy storms that they had weathered together, for so many years. This attachment on the part of the former, though shaken and interrupted when Lord North joined Mr. Fox in 1783, yet revived in the royal bosom at a subsequent period, on Lord North becoming blind ; a circumstance at which, when made known to him, his majesty expressed the deepest concern and sympathy. He did not then probably foresee that he should himself be visited with the same affliction ; a point of similarity between them, which is not a little remarkable.

Besides his ministerial offices, Lord North was lord warden of the Cinque Ports, and Lady North enjoyed the rangiership of Bushy Park. It was there, that having escaped from the "*Fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*," surrounded by his family, he appeared peculiarly an object of esteem and of attachment, divested of all form or ostentation ; lively and playful as a boy, yet never without dignity ; diffusing gaiety and good humour round him. Even those who opposed the *minister*, involuntarily loved the *man*. I have had the honour to visit him at Bushy Park, to dine with him when no other stranger was present, and to participate of the scene that I here describe. As *Pope* asserts of Sir Robert Walpole, so may I on this subject say,

" Seen him I have, but in the social hour
Of private converse, ill exchanged for power."

The Earl of Guildford, Lord North's father, attained to a very advanced age : I believe, to eighty-six, and had nearly survived his son, only dying about two years before him. So that Lord North, like his predecessor, Sir Robert Wal-

pole, remained a member of the House of Commons, during almost his whole life. Lord Guildford had been three times married; Dr. North, the present Bishop of Winchester, being his son by the second wife. Lord North sprung from his first marriage. The minister secured the reversion, if I may so term it, of the bishoprick of Winchester, for his brother, by a piece of address. For, the archiepiscopal see of York having become vacant on the decease of Dr. Drummond; Lord North, who knew that the king had destined that high ecclesiastical promotion for Dr. Markham, then Bishop of Chester, determined nevertheless to ask it for Dr. North, Bishop of Worcester. Conscious that he should meet with a refusal, for which he was prepared, he ably made it subservient to the attainment of his real object, Winchester; a mitre that might be reasonably expected soon to drop, from the age and infirmities of its possessor, Dr. Thomas. When Lord North preferred his request, the king replied, that it was impossible to gratify him, as the archbishoprick of York must be conferred on the Bishop of Chester. The first minister insisted: but the sovereign remained firm, recapitulated the obligations which he owed to Dr. Markham, for his care of the Prince of Wales's education, and left no prospect of effecting any change in his resolution. "Your majesty then," said Lord North, "will, I hope, have no objection to give my brother the see of Winchester, whenever it may become vacant?" "Oh, by all means," answered the king, "you may rely on it:" a promise, which soon afterwards received its accomplishment.

I will conclude the subject of Lord North, on which I dwell with complacency, by observing, that though he cannot be esteemed a great statesman in the most comprehensive sense; though he neither possessed those vast energies of character and extraordinary talents, which have immortalized the first Mr. Pitt; nor that assemblage of qualities fitted for the conduct of a popular government, which distinguished the second Mr. Pitt; though Lord North was even a very unfortunate, as well as a most unpopular minister, during the far greater

part, or the whole course of his administration; yet he possessed distinguished claims to national esteem. The American war formed the weight which dragged him down: a load that would have sunk the great Lord Chatham himself, if he had attempted to lift it, notwithstanding his endowments of mind, sustained by popular favour. In the year 1758, when that eminent statesman was called to the direction of public affairs, not by the sovereign, but by the nation, he had only to conduct and point the resources of the country against France. His son, in 1793, beheld himself placed, as the champion of order, morals, religion, and monarchical government, in opposition to the most sanguinary and detestable republic (if a fierce democracy, whose sceptre was the *guillotine*, could be with justice entitled to that denomination); which ever arose among men. Both ministers were in some measure sustained and impelled by the very contest. But Lord North, who derived little support from his countrymen, and none from the nature of the war, could only look to the crown for protection against public clamour, in and out of parliament. In the distribution of honours and dignities, he was far more sparing than his successor; a fact of which we shall be convinced, if we compare the list of peerages created between 1770 and 1782, with those made by Mr. Pitt, when first minister, within the same portion of time, during any period of his administration. Nor was Lord North equally profuse of the public money, as Mr. Pitt proved himself, whatever severity of censure he underwent for his extravagance or negligence, in the management and expenditure of the finances. No impeachment of any subordinate minister, or of any member of his cabinet, ever took place, for defalcation, or misapplication of sums which passed through his hands, as we witnessed in 1805. Yet the opposition in the lower house of parliament, during the whole progress of the American war, exceeded in numbers, and at least equalled in virulence, the minority which impeached Lord Melville.

As a man, considered in every private relation, even in his very weaknesses, Lord North was most amiable. Under

that point of view, his character will rise on a comparison with any first minister of Great Britain, who existed during the course of the eighteenth century; not excepting Lord Godolphin, Mr. Pelham, or the Marquis of Rockingham. The two former individuals were justly accused of a passion for play, which accompanied them through life; a vice from which Lord North was wholly exempt. *Burnet*, who recounts the fact relative to the Lord Treasurer Godolphin, says, "He loved gaming the most of any man of business I ever knew; and gave one reason for it; because it delivered him from the obligation to talk much." Dodington, when relating Mr. Pelham's attachment to the same ruinous gratification, adds, that he studiously concealed it with the utmost care. Lord North possessed better intellectual resources in himself. He possessed likewise the highest sources of enjoyment in his family, surrounded by his numerous and amiable children. The Marquis of Rockingham, however personally estimable, was childless; and Lord Bute's fire-side was not characterized by the same expansion of the heart, the same emancipation from all severity of form, or the same ebullitions of fancy and intellect. His immediate predecessor, the Duke of Grafton, respecting whom "*Junius*" observes, when speaking of his domestic qualities, "Your grace has now made the complete revolution of the political zodiac, from the *scorpion* in which you stung Lord Chatham, to the hopes of a *virgin* in the House of Bloomsbury;"—the duke could support no competition with Lord North, in the endearing charities of life, where the minister becomes merged in the father, the husband, and the individual. If we would try to find his equal in these endowments and virtues, we must remount to Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, or to Hyde, Earl of Clarendon. Every beholder, while contemplating the monument where rest the remains of the great Earl of Chatham, or of the second Mr. Pitt, erected to their memory by national gratitude, must be penetrated with emotions of admiration and respect: but, all those who personally knew Lord North, or had ever mixed with him in society,

when regarding his tomb, would involuntarily find their eyes suffused in tears.

The post of secretary of state for the *northern* department, was at that time filled by Lord Stormont; a nobleman, who having passed great part of his life in a diplomatic capacity, on the continent, principally at the courts of Dresden and Vienna, necessarily possessed a considerable knowledge of the interests and politics of Europe. He had nevertheless manifested no great vigilance, nor displayed any superior penetration, during his recent embassy at Paris; where, it was commonly believed, he had been deceived by the protestations, or duped by the artifices, of Maurepas and of Vergennes, previous to the open interference of France in the affairs of America. I well remember, *Powis*, when speaking of him, on the 8th of March, 1782, in the course of a speech which made a deep impression on the House of Commons, observed, "Lord Stormont fills the post of one of the secretaries of state. But, what treaties has he ever signed? In what instance has he ever displayed the talents of a statesman or a politician? Perhaps he may have received at his office, and notified to the king in due form, accounts of the birth, the marriage, or the death of foreign princes. But, all his politics seem there to terminate. How far he can be regarded as a proper minister to negotiate peace with the American colonies, we may infer from one of his answers to them."—"His majesty's ministers receive application from rebels, only when they sue for pardon." Yet, what other reply could Lord Stormont then make, representing, as he did, the king, whose ambassador he was at the court of Versailles? Decorated with the insignia of the order of the thistle, his person, noble and imposing, presented the appearance of a man of quality: but his manners, destitute of amenity, stiff and constrained, were not calculated to ingratiate, or to seduce. His enemies accused him of parsimony; and his greatest admirers admitted that he bore no resemblance to *Timon*, either in his household, his table, or his general expense. His near alliance to the Earl of Mansfield, of whom he was the ne-

phew and collateral heir, if it conferred no claim to popular favour, unquestionably conduced to render him more acceptable at St. James's. Even his opponents admitted him to possess judgment, as well as application; and whenever he rose in the House of Peers, he displayed a thorough acquaintance with the subject on which he spoke, together with great precision of language, and force of argument.

The Earl of Hillsborough, who held the *southern* department, was a man of elegant manners, and wanted neither ability, nor attention to public business: but, his natural endowments, however solid, did not arise above mediocrity. He had owed his political, as well as personal elevation in life, more to his good sense, penetration, suavity, and address, than to any intellectual superiority. At St. James's he was more at home, than at Westminster; and might rather be esteemed an accomplished courtier, than a superior minister. His mind was indeed highly cultivated, but it seemed to be rather the information of a gentleman, than the knowledge of a statesman. I have seen him much embarrassed and disconcerted in the session of 1781, when called on officially in the House of Lords, to explain, or to justify, the measures adopted in Bengal:—an embarrassment which arose from his ignorance of names, places, and circumstances in that quarter of the globe. with which, as secretary of state for the East Indies, he ought to have been acquainted. We must, however, recollect that very few persons, except such as were locally connected with India, had then attained any accurate information respecting the company's territories, revenues, and affairs. Of this assertion I could adduce many proofs. In February, 1782, when Lord Shelburne, while speaking in the House of Peers, made allusion to "a king, or supreme rajah of the Mharattas," he felt himself compelled to explain to their lordships, the nature and narrow limits of that nominal sovereignty; with which, as well as with the office of "peshwa," or efficient ruler of the Mharatta empire, nine-tenths of his audience were utterly unacquainted. I recollect the astonishment, not unmingled with some degree of

ridicule, excited in the House of Commons on Governor Johnstone's first mention and description of the Harbour of Trincomalé in the Island of Ceylon; a bay, which probably, till that occasion, had never been heard of by the greater part of the country members. Though the irruption of Hyder Ally into the Carnatic in 1780, powerfully awakened and attracted the national attention to the subject; it was Fox's memorable "Bill," followed at a short interval, by Hastings's trial, that diffused over the whole kingdom, an eagerness for oriental knowledge.

But Lord George Germain, who presided over the American department, excited, from a variety of causes, far more public consideration, while he presented a fairer mark for parliamentary attack, or for popular declamation, than either of the other secretaries of state. His recognised abilities, the circumstance of his being a member of the House of Commons; not, like his two colleagues, removed from the front ranks of warfare, by their situation in the upper House of Parliament; even the events of his former life, when commanding the British forces in Germany; and above all, the object of the war in which we were engaged; a war, that at the commencement of 1781, still professed to be the subjugation of the revolted colonies;—these united circumstances rendered him, after Lord North, the most prominent person in administration. As I had the honour to enjoy a place in his friendship, and to live with him during the latter years of his life, on terms of great intimacy, I may pretend to have known him well. Nor will I deny that I am partial to his memory; but, that partiality will never induce me to pervert, or to misrepresent any fact; though I am aware that it may unintentionally bias my opinion. He had completed his sixty-fifth year, at this time; but, a frame of body naturally robust, and a vigorous constitution, secured him almost uninterrupted health, together with the enjoyment of all his faculties; among which, his memory was conspicuous. In his person, which rose to near six feet, he was muscular, and capable of enduring much bodily as well as mental fatigue.

Though his features were strongly pronounced and saturnine, yet considered together as a whole, their effect by no means displeased. An air of high birth and dignity, illuminated by strong sense, pervaded every lineament of his face. His countenance indicated intellect, particularly his eye, the motions of which were quick and piercing. On first acquaintance, his manner and air impressed those who approached him with an idea of proud reserve; but no man, in private society, unbent himself more, or manifested less self-importance. In the midst of his family; — for he rarely dined from home, except at the cabinet dinners; and in the company of a few select friends, he soon forgot the toils annexed to public life, the asperities of debate, and the vexations of office. Even after the latest nights in the House of Commons, he always sat down to a delicately served table, drank a pint of claret, unbent his mind, and passed in review the incidents of the preceding evening. It was then that his conversation became most entertaining; seasoned with curious anecdotes collected during the course of a long life, passed in the highest circles, amidst the greatest affairs in England, Ireland, Scotland, and on the continent, where he had served; embracing the secret history of the present, and of the two late reigns. Nor was his information limited to the accession of the Hanoverian line, but extended to the preceding sovereigns. The Duchess of Dorset, his mother, had been a maid of honour to Queen Anne; and his father, the duke, remembered William the Third. When Lord George entered on the events of those times, he might be said to raise the curtain that concealed from vulgar eyes, the palaces of Whitehall, of St. James's, of Kensington, and of Hampton Court. The private adventures, all the minute recitals calculated to awaken, as well as to gratify curiosity; many particulars relative to the illustrious persons of both sexes who composed the courts of William and of Anne; particulars, which though the gravity of history may disdain, yet which delight and instruct; — such were the frequent subjects of his discourse. Had I committed to paper at

that period, the materials which he profusely threw before me, I might have composed a work of the highest interest to the present age, and to posterity: but mine are only reminiscences.

Though Lord George Germain was highly born, his education did not altogether correspond with his extraction, and he owed far more to nature than to cultivation. He had, indeed, been brought up in the college of Dublin; but he possessed little information derived from books, nor had he improved his mind by extensive reading, in the course of subsequent years. Even after his retreat from public employment, in the decline of life, when at Drayton, where he possessed a fine library, he rarely opened an author, except for a short time on his return from coursing, shooting, riding, or other favourite exercises. He had visited Paris, when young, with his father, the Duke of Dorset; and the French language was familiar to him: but, with Horace, Tacitus, or Cicero, he had formed little acquaintance. His initiation into public life, politics, and parliament, took place too early, to admit of storing his mind with classic images or ideas. Though he was versed in English history since the time of Elizabeth, during which period of near two centuries, some one of his immediate ancestors had almost always sat, and sometimes presided, in the councils of the sovereign, he was not conversant in our annals of an earlier date. But, on the other hand, he had witnessed much with his own eyes, he had heard still more from others, he seized with ease on whatever was submitted to his understanding, and he forgot nothing.

In business he was rapid, yet clear and accurate; rather negligent in his style, which was that of a gentleman and a man of the world, unstudied, and frequently careless, even in his official despatches. But, there was no obscurity or ambiguity in his compositions. Capable of application in cases of necessity, he nevertheless passed little time at the desk, or in the closet: and while secretary of state, under critical, as well as perilous circumstances, when every courier brought, or might bring, accounts the most disastrous; no man who saw

him at table, or of an evening in his drawing room, would have suspected from his deportment and conversation, that the responsibility of the American war reposed principally on his shoulders. More than one member of the cabinet was supposed to enjoy a greater degree of personal acceptability with the king; but none exercised the privilege of speaking with more freedom to him. Lord George seldom hazarded to ask favours; but when he undertook any cause, he rarely receded till he had obtained the object. Dr. Eliot, who then practised physic with some celebrity, and of whose medical skill Lord George entertained a high opinion; induced him to exert his interest at court, for procuring the doctor to be created a baronet. The king, who disliked Eliot personally, and regarded his professional talents with as little partiality, displayed much repugnance to grant the request. Yielding, however, at last, "Well," my lord," said he, "since you desire it, let it be: but, remember, he shall not be my physician." "No, sir," answered Lord George, bowing, "He shall be your Majesty's baronet, and my physician." The king laughed, and Eliot was raised to the baronetage.

In the House of Commons, down to the last hour that Lord George remained a member of that assembly, he was constantly the object of the severest and most pointed attacks of the opposition; who always hoped to force, from his irritability, the secret or the fact, which they had vainly attempted to extort from the apathy and tranquillity of Lord North. In this endeavour they frequently succeeded; for Lord George, goaded by reproaches, often fictitious, frequently unjust, and always exaggerated, generally started up sooner or later, repelled the charges advanced, and in so doing, sometimes put the adversary in possession of the very matter which they sought to discover. I have continually witnessed the fact to which I allude. Fox himself admitted this characteristic feature of Lord George's formation of mind. I recollect, that during the debate which took place relative to the capture of the Island of St. Eustatius, in the session of 1781; Fox, while he censured most severely the proceedings

of our commanders, in their confiscation of the private property there found, acknowledged "the unwary frankness of the secretary of state (Lord George), as a quality for which he was sometimes praised in the House of Commons, and blamed out of it." A still more conspicuous exhibition of this merit, or of this defect in his character, — for I am uncertain under which class it ought to be ranked, — I witnessed only a few days later in the same session. Burke having brought forward a very pointed and serious charge against government, for neglect in not supplying the garrison of Gibraltar, then besieged by the Spaniards, with gunpowder; in consequence of which egregious want of precaution, Admiral Darby, when sent to the relief of the fortress, was reduced to the necessity of stripping his fleet, in order to leave two thousand barrels of powder in the magazine; Sir Charles Cocks, Mr. Kenrick, Sir Charles Frederic, and other members of the board of ordnance, who were present, attempted to contradict the story as not authentic, or of which they had at least no information. But, George Byng persisting in the charge, and demanding a more satisfactory answer, the American secretary rose, and observed that though he could only speak from rumour, and had no official nor other intelligence on the point to communicate, yet that his own opinion was, the report had a foundation in truth. He added, that if it should so turn out, Admiral Darby had acted in a very meritorious manner, by leaving for the supply of the garrison whatever quantity of gunpowder he could spare, without endangering the safety of his own fleet. Lord North remained silent during this avowal of Lord George, and took no part whatever in the debate.

Lord George spoke, as he wrote, without much premeditation, from the impulse of the occasion; in animated, rather than in correct language; with vehemence, but not without dignity. His voice was powerful, and his figure commanding; though he did not always thoroughly possess himself, nor display the coolness demanded by so trying a situation as that of American secretary. His opponents, who well knew, availed themselves of this defect in his formation

of mind. On the other hand, the keenness of his sight gave him a prodigious advantage over Lord North, when in the House of Commons. Lord George Germain had no sooner taken his seat on the treasury bench, than he pervaded with a glance of his eye, the opposition benches; saw who attended, as well as who were absent; and formed his conclusions accordingly on the business of the day. He used to say, that for those who were enabled to exercise this faculty, every thing was to be *seen* in the house; where, on the contrary, nothing except declamation was to be gained by the *ear*. No man better understood the management of parliament; the prolongation or acceleration of a debate, according to the temper or the number of the members present; and every detail of official dexterity or address, requisite in conducting affairs submitted to a popular assembly. To all these arts of government, he had served two long and severe apprenticeships in Ireland, as secretary to his father, the Duke of Dorset, when successively lord lieutenant of that kingdom. In political courage and firmness he was not deficient. I have seen him in circumstances which sufficiently put those qualities to the proof, towards the close of the American war, when intelligence arrived of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown: a disaster of the most irreparable nature, the load of which fell almost exclusively on himself.

While summing up Lord George's character, it is so impossible not to think of the business at Minden, and consequently not to allude to it, that my silence on this subject would seem to imply my conviction of the justice of the sentence passed on him by the court martial. On the other hand, I feel how delicate and invidious a matter it is, on which to touch, even at the distance of more than half a century. Yet, as *personal* and *political* courage, though altogether dissimilar, are commonly considered to have an intimate connexion; as we are even with difficulty induced to allow, or duly to estimate any virtues, however eminent, in a man whom we suppose to have been deficient in the former of those essential qualities; as general prejudice is certainly in Lord

George's disfavour, and as I may claim to possess some information on the subject, I shall enter briefly into the disquisition.

I lay no stress on Lord George Germain's illustrious extraction, since we all know that the greatest houses have produced the most degenerate descendants; instances of which in point, to which, from motives of delicacy and personal consideration I forbear alluding, have occurred in our own times. Pope justly exclaims,

"What can ennoble slaves, or sots, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!"

It is nevertheless an incentive to noble achievements, when we descend from those who have performed such actions. The memorable *letter* of *Edward*, Earl of Dorset, describing his duel with Lord Bruce, under the reign of James the First, commemorated in the "*Guardian*;" and the celebrated *song*, beginning,

"To all you ladies now on land,
We men at sea indite,"

which was composed by *Charles*, Earl of Dorset, Lord George's grandfather, as we are assured, on the night before the engagement between the English fleet, and that of Holland, commanded by Opdam, under Charles the Second's reign:—these two productions, which are as universally known as the language in which they are written, sufficiently attest that he drew his lineage from men of courage. His maternal grandfather, Marshal Colyear, brother of the first Earl of Portmore, and governor of Namur, with whom Lord George passed much time in his youth; had grown grey in all the sieges and battles of the Low Countries, under William the Third. As soon as England took a part in the war occasioned by the accession of Maria Theresa, in 1743, Lord George was sent to the continent; where he served, if not with marked distinction, certainly without the slightest reproach, under the command of Lord Stair, and of his late Britannic Majesty. In 1745, at the battle of Fontenoy, where such a number of our officers fell, he

received a musket-ball in the breast, and was thrown upon a wagon, with many others. He had preserved the uniform that he wore on that day, which I have seen and examined; bearing on it the mark of the ball, corresponding to the place where he was struck, and other holes in the skirts of the coat, perforated by bullets. During the domestic rebellion that followed the defeat of Fontenoy, being recalled to his own country, he accompanied William Duke of Cumberland, from the commencement, to the close, of the insurrection in Scotland; where great condemnation was bestowed on his services.

Among the Dorset papers, which I have seen, were preserved a series of letters, addressed by him to the duke his father, containing many interesting incidents of the years 1745 and 1746, while he was serving in the Highlands, against the rebels. On the breaking out of the war in 1756, he accompanied the late Duke of Marlborough, on those desultory expeditions to the coast of Normandy and Brittany, productive of little benefit, and of still less honour, when we bombarded St. Malo, and demolished Cherburgh. After the demise of the duke, which took place at Munster, towards the close of 1758, it is well known that Lord George commanded the British forces during the ensuing campaign; and in particular, at the battle of Minden. That he did not advance at the head of the cavalry, on that occasion with the celerity that might have been wished; and that his delay is ever to be regretted on a *national* account, because, if he had so advanced the defeat of the enemy would have been much more complete; that consequently he became a just subject of blame or of censure, if we judge by *the result*, and not by *the motive*;—all these points must be conceded to his accusers. But, the only question is, whether he manifested any such backwardness to lead on the horse, after he received Prince Ferdinand's orders for that purpose, as justly rendered him liable to the suspicion of reluctance or to the imputation of cowardice?

The dispositions of Lieutenant Colonels Ligonier, Sloper, and Fitzroy, would certainly seem to affix on him,

either one or the other of these charges. But, the evidence of Lieutenant Colonel Hotham, as well as the positive testimony of Captains Lloyd and Smith, two of Lord George's Aid-du-Camps, appears as completely to exculpate him. There were even negative, if not positive doubts, stated by Hotham and Smith, relative to the accuracy, not to say the truth or existence, of the asserted conversation held by Colonels Fitzroy and Ligonier with Lord George, when they successively delivered him Prince Ferdinand's orders. Captain Smith, Sir Sidney Smith's father, I very intimately knew; who was himself a man of distinguished personal courage, strictly conscientious, and incapable of asserting any fact that he disbelieved. He never entertained an idea that Lord George was withheld by unbecoming personal motives, from advancing at Minden. Even on the testimony of Fitzroy, Sloper, and Ligonier, it plainly appeared that either Prince Ferdinand's orders were in themselves contradictory, or were misunderstood by the Aid-du-Camps, or were imperfectly delivered by them. Lord George displayed evident irresolution under those circumstances. He first halted, and afterwards did not cause the cavalry to advance with the rapidity, that would have ensured the enemy's entire defeat. Probably, similar accidents happen in almost every great engagement. But, the world, which pardons the excesses of intemperate courage, never forgives the slightest appearance of backwardness in the field. Prince Rupert, who three times ruined the affairs of Charles the First; who by his impetuous valour, lost him the three battles of Edge Hill, of Marston Moor, and of Naseby, is pardoned by posterity: while Admiral Byng and Lord George Sackville remain under imputation. Such, however unjust it seems, will ever be the lot of military men who venture to hold back, when they might go forward in action.

It must nevertheless excite no small surprise, that Prince Ferdinand, though he alludes in the general orders issued on the day following the battle, to Lord George's supposed misconduct; yet, in the first despatches sent to this country, containing the account of the victory,

made no public mention whatever of it; and some days elapsed, before the prince preferred any formal accusation against him. I have seen among the Dorset papers, a series of Lord George's letters to his father, written from the allied army, during that campaign, extending to within very few days of the action at Minden. * And I have likewise perused the notes addressed to Lionel, Duke of Dorset, from the foreign office of the secretary of state here, on the arrival of the official intelligence of the engagement; felicitating the duke on the result of a battle so glorious to this country, and in which he must necessarily feel so deep a personal interest. Not a word, nor a hint, appears in these notes of Lord George's supposed want of alacrity. How are we to explain this line of conduct in the prince? It would seem as if the charge should have instantly followed the act.

George the Second, it must be remembered, was at this time near seventy-six years old; strongly prejudiced, as we well know, in favour of his relative and countryman, Prince Ferdinand; and naturally chagrined at an event, which, even though it should have been publicly recognized as the mere effect of misconception or mistake in the orders sent by the commander-in-chief, yet equally afforded subject for regret, on account of its injurious public consequences. Under these circumstances the court martial took place, and the king's sentiments respecting Lord George's culpability, were universally known throughout the country. It is a fact that his late majesty sent him a message, acquainting him of his own determination to put into execution the sentence of the court, whatever it might be, without delay or mitigation. Lord George was tried in March, 1760. Had the late king died in October, 1759, instead of October, 1760; or if Lord George's trial had taken place in 1761, might not the result, in all probability, have been far less severe, or altogether different, under a new reign, when the clamour of the hour had subsided?

Other considerations come to the aid of these reflections. In 1759 and 1760, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick occupied a high place in the admiration of the

English public; by whom he was considered as only inferior in the field, to *the protestant hero*, as he was then absurdly denominated; Frederic, King of Prussia. But his popularity, I mean Prince Ferdinand's, proved of very short duration. As early as January, 1761, we may see "in Dodington's Diary," how low the prince had fallen in general estimation, and what serious accusations were brought against him. Dodington, relating the particulars of a conversation which he had at that time with the Earl of Bute, says, I told him, "That I thought Prince Ferdinand was become as unpopular in the army, as he was once popular: that he was accused of three great heads of malversation. The first was, that he had exacted complete pay for uncomplete corps: the second, that not one shilling of all those devastating contributions, had been carried to the public account: the third, that he had received good money, and had paid the troops in bad, to a very great amount, and at a great discount." These charges do not appear to have ever been refuted. The precedent of Admiral Byng, shot very unjustly, on an accusation of cowardice, was recent. If the members of the military tribunal who tried Lord George, believed that he had committed the same crime as the one imputed to that unfortunate naval commander, why did they not pass on him the same sentence? There can be only one answer. The evidence brought forward, fell short of proof; and under those circumstances, they doubtless were not convinced that he merited death. But, still, as the prejudices, or prevailing opinions of the time, hardly admitted on the other hand, of his acquittal, they cashiered him. It is for posterity to revise, perhaps to reverse, that sentence: not juridically, but as a court of opinion, deciding in the last resort, on all human actions submitted to their censure or approval. I have endeavoured fairly to state the leading circumstances, on which they may found a judgment.

Lord George's duel with Governor Johnstone, is a well known fact. On that occasion, even by his adversary's admission, he exhibited perfect self-possession; presenting so fair and erect a mark, while he calmly waited for the

governor's fire, that it extorted from him an involuntary testimony of Lord George's courage. The late Lord Sydney, then Mr. Thomas Townsend, who was his lordship's second, equally witnessed and attested his coolness. How can we believe or conceive that such a man, on such a field as Minden, before so many spectators, would, from personal fear, have at once covered himself with ignominy? As little is it proved, whatever we may suspect, that motives of personal animosity to Prince Ferdinand, with whom we know he was on bad terms, operated on Lord George's mind, and impelled him to delay moving forward with the cavalry to complete the victory. It is evident, on the calmest and most dispassionate review of the transaction, which has obtained such a melancholy celebrity in our military annals under George the Second; that an ambiguity in Prince Ferdinand's orders to Lord George, or a contradiction in them, produced the whole misfortune. We may indeed assert, or believe, that the British commander intentionally misunderstood them. But, where was the proof adduced of that fact? Captain Ligonier brings an order for the whole cavalry to advance. Colonel Fitzroy, almost in the same moment, orders only the *British* cavalry to advance. On receiving these opposite messages, Lord George halts the cavalry, while he gallops up to Prince Ferdinand, in order to receive his personal instructions. There might be error in this delay, and public injury might accrue from it, as Prince Ferdinand asserts did actually ensue, when in his "General Orders" above alluded to, he says, that if the "Marquis of Granby had been at the head of the cavalry of the right wing, he is persuaded, the decision of that day would have been more complete and more brilliant." Still there is no proof of Lord George's voluntary misconstruction of the orders, or of his reluctance to execute them; and the error might have originated in mistake, as well as in volition. How easily would the whole misfortune have been rendered impossible, if Prince Ferdinand had, like Prince Eugene of Savoy, whom he might have copied on this point; only sent *one*

of his successive orders written in *pen-cil*? Prince Eugene expressly says in his "Memoirs"—"I derived much benefit from always carrying in my pocket a pencil, to write in the Officer's Memorandum Book, the order which I gave him to carry." Such was the constant practice of that illustrious commander, when in the field; a practice peculiarly demanded in the instance before us, if Prince Ferdinand thought that he had any reason to doubt Lord George's prompt and ready obedience. I return from this digression.

The Earl of Sandwich, who had presided during ten years at the head of the admiralty, was universally admitted to possess eminent talents, great application to the duties of his office, and thorough acquaintance with public business. Like Lord George Germain, he was tall, of a vigorous frame, apparently designed for longevity; and his physiognomy full of expression: but conviviality, rather than forethought or profound reflection, characterized his features. A distinguished votary of wit, conviviality, and pleasure, like Wilmot, the licentious Earl of Rochester, from whom he lineally descended, he had nevertheless been early initiated into political life; and was sent by Mr. Pelham, then first minister, as one of the plenipotentiaries in 1748, at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. In all official functions he displayed perspicuity, as well as despatch. No naval officer who stated his demand to the first lord of the admiralty, with becoming brevity, ever waited for an answer; and he was accustomed to say, "If any man will draw up his case, and put his name at the foot of the first page, I will give him an immediate reply. Where he compels me to turn over the sheet, he must wait my leisure." How laconically, yet forcibly he could write, with what conciseness and severity blended, he exhibited in his memorable note to Mr. Eden, afterwards created Lord Auckland. That gentleman, when he quitted his political friends in 1786, in order to join Mr. Pitt, who sent him over to Paris, for the purpose of negotiating the commercial treaty; addressed a circular letter to them, endeavouring to explain and to justify his line of conduct. Lord Sandwich, in answer to the letter that he

received on the occasion, instantly wrote back these words. "Sir, your letter is before me, and it will presently be behind me. I remain, sir, your most humble servant." For the accuracy of this anecdote, I think I may answer, having received it from the late Earl of Sandwich, his son; though the "Quarterly Review" has had the impudence and folly to assert that "the joke was the property of Lord North." Polite, accessible, and endowed with great natural capacity, it might have been expected that as first lord of the admiralty, he would acquire the public favour, in no less a degree than he enjoyed the confidence of his sovereign. But, many causes conduced to render him an object of popular dislike or disapprobation; some of which were personal, others political. At an early period of his majesty's reign, Wilkes and Churchill combined their powers, in order to expose his character to universal condemnation. The former, in his "Letter to the Electors of Aylesbury," written from Paris, in October, 1764, designates Lord Sandwich, as the most abandoned man of the age:" while Churchill, in his poem of the "Candidate," speaking of him, says,

"Vice, bold substantial vice, puts in her claim,
And stamps him perfect in the books of shame,
Observe his follies well, and you would swear
Folly had been his first, his only care.
Observe his vices, you'll that oath disown,
And swear that he was born for vice alone.
Search earth, search hell, the devil cannot find
An agent like *Lothario* to his mind."

However unjust or exaggerated might be these accusations, yet we must own that the part he took in denouncing the "Essay on Woman," to the House of Peers, laid him open to the charge of breach of confidence; and attracted towards him the severest animadversions of the author, whose pen inflicted the most incurable wounds. Though he had already attained at this time his sixty-second year, his licentious mode of life seemed more befitting a minister of Charles the Second, than a confidential servant of George the Third. His fortune, which did not altogether correspond with his high rank, and habits of gratification or expense, was supposed to

lay him open to seduction; or at least to render him capable of listening to propositions, that a more independent man might have disdained. Even his warmest adherents reluctantly admitted that the unanimity and concord, which previous to his being placed at the head of the admiralty, characterised the British navy, was become extinct under his administration. I well recollect, the Honourable Captain John Luttrell, who in January, 1782, when Fox attacked Lord Sandwich, defended him with great zeal and no ordinary ability, in the House of Commons; yet did not attempt to deny this feature of the time. "At present," said he, "the navy is torn to pieces by dissensions. Officers scarcely ever see each other, except on duty. Nor have they any longer access to the tables of their superiors, as formerly, when an *Anson*, a *Boscawen*, a *Hawke*, a *Saunders*, and a *Kepple* commanded the fleets of England. Then, all was cordiality, ardour, and affection. The commanders took a pride in teaching the inferior orders their professional duties. Now, party, disunion, mutual jealousy, and want of confidence, are universal." It would, however, be unjust to attribute so deplorable a change to the character, system, or conduct of the minister who presided at the head of the naval department. It originated in the nature and spirit of a civil contest, which unhappily divided in sentiment the whole nation; and like the wars under Charles the First, though not in so extended a degree, pervaded the island from one extremity to the other; tearing asunder, in many instances, the closest connexions of friendship, or even of consanguinity. Ambition and self-interest, two of the most powerful impulses to human action, were not always proof to political opinions, during the course of the American war, as we witnessed in various instances.

Lord Sandwich's enemies, who were numerous and violent, maintained that even official appointments were sometimes conferred, under conditions not honourable to the first lord of the admiralty. Naval commanders, sent to important stations, on which great emoluments might be naturally expected to arise from captures, were asserted to

have a fellow feeling with their patron, and even to divide with him a certain proportion of their pecuniary acquisitions. However improbable or unproved were these assertions, which doubtless originated in party malevolence; yet, as names and minute particulars were added or invented, they obtained general credit, and made a deep impression. All the eloquence of Fox in one House of Parliament, and all the laborious pertinacity of the Duke of Richmond in the other, had been employed during successive sessions, not without effect, in impressing the public mind with unfavourable sentiments towards him. Palliser was represented as the object of his partiality; Kepple, as the victim of his persecution. During the riots of the preceding summer, in June, 1780, he had been marked out by the mob as a sacrifice, and narrowly escaped the effects of their blind animosity.

There can remain no reasonable doubt in the mind of any impartial man, that when Lord Sandwich succeeded Sir Edward Hawke in that great office, the admiralty; on the able and vigorous administration of which, the consequence, power, and grandeur of Britain so eminently depend; he found the navy in a state of decline and depression. An injudicious, narrow system of economy, had reduced the fleet to such a point, during the seven years subsequent to the peace, that in 1770, when we were menaced with a rupture on the business of Falkland Islands, it was found impossible speedily to fit out a force competent to impose the law on Spain. Lord Hawke, great on the element of the water, where he had triumphed over and nearly annihilated the French fleet in 1759, made a very inefficient first lord of the admiralty. I believe this fact was not contested by the warmest admirers of that illustrious commander, though Admiral Kepple, in a speech pronounced towards the close of the American war, when every species of obloquy was heaped on Lord Sandwich, with a view to drive him out of office; alluding to Sir Edward Hawke, denominated him "the father of the English navy, whom it was now the fashion to revile." But Lord Mulgrave, rising immediately in reply, observed, "I love and revere

the memory of that gallant seaman so much, that I cannot sit here, and allow him to be degraded by unmerited praise. He was, indeed, so great and so able a seaman, that he was not formed for the details and civil duties of office: nor did I ever consider him as a great naval minister." Lord Sandwich was unquestionably industrious, zealous, indefatigable, enlightened, and in every point of view adequate to the duties of his station; but he could not surmount the augmenting pressure of war and calamity which, between 1775 and 1782, pressed upon this country. Yet scarcely had he been driven from the admiralty for pretended neglect or want of exertion, than the fleet which he had just sent out to the West Indies, obtained the most glorious and decisive victory over the enemy.

With consummate ability, Lord Sandwich had constructed a species of political citadel within the ministerial trenches, which acknowledged hardly any other commander or comptroller than himself. The India House constituted this fortress, of which he was supposed to possess the secret keys. Many of the leading directors, among whom were the two chairmen, looked for orders, as it was commonly believed, not so much to Lord North, as to the first lord of the admiralty. The influence, necessarily conferred by such a source of power, at a time when the East India Board of Control had no existence, cannot easily be estimated. He was not wanting in endeavours to sustain his interest in Leadenhall-street, by every possible means; and well aware of its importance, he contrived to distribute among his chief adherents in that quarter, some of the minor honours of the crown. On all great occasions, when the concealed springs of that complicated machine, denominated the *East India Company*, were necessary to be touched, application was made to Lord Sandwich. Even the intimations sent from the treasury remained inefficient, till confirmed by him; and when the first minister, towards the close of the year 1780, was prevailed on to recommend Lord Macartney for Governor of Madras, as successor to Rumbold, he found that no serious attention was paid

to his wishes, before the admiralty lent its co-operation. So vast a field of exclusive patronage and favour, rendered its possessor not only independent of his colleagues in the cabinet, but formidable to them; he might justly be accounted one of the most powerful, as he was certainly one of the most able, members of the administration.

Fox, in order to render Lord Sandwich odious, did not hesitate to enumerate his commanding interest in Leadenhall-street, as one among his political crimes. On the 23d of January, 1782, when Fox moved for a number of papers, preparatory to the proposed inquiry into the administration of the admiralty under that nobleman; he observed, that "of all the members of the cabinet, there was not one more formidable from influence, if so formidable, as the Earl of Sandwich. As first lord of the admiralty, he could influence a whole profession. As a minister, he must of course be sustained by the influence of his colleagues in office. But," added he, "independent of these two sources of influence, Lord Sandwich possesses a third, which, though not equal to the power of the crown, forms a material addition to it; and when conjoined with it, is sufficient to crush any individual who shall venture to bring forward charges against him. The influence to which I allude, *he derives from the East India Company.*" Lord Mulgrave, who with very considerable ability and great zeal defended Lord Sandwich; after animadverting severely on the *calumnies* and *invectives* in which Fox had indulged himself against the first lord of the admiralty; demanded, "What connection there was between the supposed influence possessed by the Earl of Sandwich in the India House, and his official conduct at the head of the naval department?" Fox proceeded so far on the occasion to which I allude, as to denominate Lord Sandwich, "*this faithful servant of the King of France.*" Pulteney treated Sir Robert Walpole in a similar manner. Adverting to the capture made by the Spaniards in 1780, when Captain Murray's convoy fell into their hands, Fox observed, that "the circumstances attending it, augmented the suspicion

occasioned by many other acts of the first lord of the admiralty; that *he was desirous to perform good and faithful service to his masters of the House of Bourbon.*" Not that Fox lent the slightest faith to these calumnious imputations, of which he well knew the falsehood and absurdity: but they were necessary towards attaining the great object, of overturning Lord North's administration. We cannot however reflect without amazement, that a House of Commons should allow such epithets to be used, and such charges to be made, by one of its own body, against a great nobleman, an earl of ancient family renowned for loyalty, holding one of the highest employments, and himself a member of the cabinet. The fact itself eloquently proves how low the ministry was fallen in public respect and estimation, during the last weeks that Lord North continued at the head of affairs.

With Lord Amherst, who had already passed his sixty-third year, I was well acquainted. In his person he was tall and thin, of an adult habit, with an aquiline nose, and an intelligent countenance. His manners were grave, formal, and cold. As commander-in-chief, or to speak more accurately, as commanding-in-chief the forces, he enjoyed a place in the cabinet. To Lionel, Duke of Dorset, he owed his first entrance into the army. From the situation of a private gentleman, descended of a good Kentish family in Holmesdale, but of very slender fortune; his military talents, and his success in America, had deservedly elevated him to the British peerage. Selected by the discerning eye of the Earl of Chatham, he had been sent out as a companion of *Wolfe*, whose brilliant conquest of Quebec, was confirmed by Amherst's subsequent reduction of Montreal and Upper Canada. Under the shade of these laurels so honourably earned, which had likewise been remunerated with the order of the *Bath*, he seemed to challenge the national esteem, not to say their gratitude. Individually, he possessed both: but in his official character, at the head of the army, he did not escape censure on various points materially affecting the discipline and the honour of the service. Not that I would be understood,

when speaking of Lord Amherst, to make the same assertion which *Junius* does of the Marquis of Granby, in his first memorable Letter, dated 21st January, 1769: a letter which fortunately for the fame of "Junius," induced Sir William Draper to become Lord Granby's defender, and thus attracted public notice towards the production. He there charges that nobleman with "degrading the office of commander-in-chief, into a broker of commissions." But, though Lord Amherst was not liable to such an imputation, yet neither he, nor any subject except one nearly allied to the throne, is raised by birth and situation, sufficiently above the crowd of petitioners who assail him in his military capacity, to set at defiance private clamour, menaces, and importunity.

As a member of the administration, no ability, however recognised or transcendent, and no past service, however eminent they might be, could have secured the public favour of Lord Amherst, in the midst of a war such as that carried on against America, marked by ill success, and now become almost hopeless in its prospective objects. The constitutional tranquillity of his temper, secured him however from being ruffled at any indications of popular dissatisfaction. I have scarcely ever known a man who possessed more stoical apathy, or command over himself. Naturally taciturn and reserved, he rarely disclosed his sentiments on any subject of a political nature. Even at the cabinet dinners, which were held weekly, I have heard Lord Sackville say, that though he usually gave his decided affirmative or negative to the specific measure proposed, yet he always did it in few words, often by a monosyllable: but, never could without great difficulty be induced to assign the reasons, or to state the grounds of his opinion. He was disinterested, of an elevated mind, that aspired beyond the accumulation of money. His judgment was sound, and his understanding solid; but neither cultivated by education, nor expanded by elegant knowledge. From the high sense entertained of his early services beyond the Atlantic, he would have attracted universal respect, if the unpopu-

larity attached to the official and ministerial posts which he occupied, had not counterbalanced the operation of those resplendent services on the public mind.

Lord Thurlow, who at this time had held the great seal between two and three years, though in point of age, he was the youngest member of the cabinet, enjoyed in many respects greater public consideration, than almost any other individual composing it. He had been indebted in his youth, to the indefatigable exertions and importunities of the celebrated Duchess of Queensberry, the friend of *Gay*, *Pope*, and *Swift*, for first procuring him from Lord Bute a silk gown, to which legal distinction he long ineffectually aspired. His talents had subsequently excited admiration in both Houses of Parliament, not less than they attracted notice at the bar. While he sat in the House of Commons, as attorney general, during more than seven years, from 1771 down to 1778, Lord North derived the greatest assistance from his eloquence and ability. His removal to the House of Peers would even have left an awful blank on the treasury bench in the midst of the American war, if his place had not, during the two succeeding years, been ably filled, perhaps fully supplied, by Wedderburn. As speaker of the upper house, Lord Thurlow fulfilled all the expectations previously entertained of him by his greatest admirers. His very person, figure, voice, and manner, were formed to lend dignity, blended with awe, to the woolsack. Of a dark complexion, and harsh, but handsome and regular features; with a severe and commanding demeanour, which might be sometimes denominated stern: he impressed his auditors with respect, before he opened his lips. Even his eyebrows, like those of Jove, "*cuncta supercilio moventis*," conduced to complete the effect of his countenance on the beholder. Energy, acuteness, and prodigious powers of argument, characterised him in debate. His comprehensive mind enabled him, when he chose to exert its powers, to embrace the question under discussion, whatever it might be, in all its bearings and relations. Nor, if we omit Lord Camden, who was already far advanced in life,

did the opposition possess any jurisdictional talents in the House of Peers, that could be justly put in competition with those of Lord Thurlow.

Fox himself, during the whole course of Lord North's administration, always excepted him from the invectives with which he loaded the other members of the cabinet. I remember, on the 8th of May, 1781, when addressing the House of Commons, Fox observed, that "incapable as were his majesty's ministers, he must yet make one exception, namely, the chancellor. He is able. He is honest. He possesses a noble and independent mind. He stands alone, as a part of such an administration. His situation and treatment among his colleagues, correspond with the features of his character. They detest him for his virtues. They envy him for his abilities. They thwart and torment him by every invention in their power. They seize every occasion to render his position uneasy. But, from his great intellectual resources, his unbroken spirit soars above them; manifesting at once his consciousness of the injuries meditated, and his contempt of their efforts." Again, on the 8th of March, in the subsequent year, 1782, only a few days before Lord North resigned, Fox, while expressing his detestation of the ministers collectively, added, "yet even among them, there exists one for whom I entertain a great respect. I mean, the lord chancellor. He always takes care indeed to convince the world that he has no share in their measures." If Lord Thurlow had really merited these *eulogiums*;—if, while despising and disapproving the measures of the cabinet in which he sat and voted, he nevertheless supported them in his place on the woolsack in the House of Peers, and on all occasions;—how relaxed must have been his political principles? But, Fox dispensed his praises, or his censures, as I always thought, with too much regard to present circumstances; retracting the one or the other, just as the exigency of the moment dictated; and covering all contradictions under the blaze of his eloquence. Only one year later, in March 1783, at which time he had formed his union with Lord North, he launched out into the severest accusations of Lord

Thurlow, because at that time Fox knew the chancellor formed the principal impediment to *the coalition* getting possession of the government.

Lord Thurlow's admirable intellectual parts were nevertheless by no means unaccompanied with corresponding defects. As lord chancellor, he was accused of procrastination, in suffering the causes brought before him in his court, to accumulate without end. Perhaps, this charge, so frequently made against those who have held the great seal, was not however more true, as applied to him, than of others who succeeded to his office. But, even in parliament, his temper, morose, sullen, and intractable, sometimes mastering his reason, prevented him from always exerting the faculties with which nature had endowed him; or at least clouded and obscured their effect. In the cabinet, these shades of character, which rendered him often impracticable, were not to be surmounted by any efforts or remonstrances. It can hardly be believed that at the weekly ministerial dinners, where, after the cloth was removed, measures of state were often discussed or agitated; Lord Thurlow would frequently refuse to take any part. He has even more than once left his colleagues to deliberate while he sullenly stretched himself along the chairs, and fell, or appeared to fall, fast asleep. If I had not received this fact from an eye-witness, and a member of that cabinet, I should not indeed venture to report a thing so improbable. The circumstance was, however, it may be presumed, well known to Fox and his friends.

Notwithstanding the ruggedness and asperity which he displayed, as well as the bold freedom of speech exercised by him; qualities that procured him the nick-name of *the tiger*; no man could at times appear more pleasing, affable, and communicative in conversation. I have once or twice seen him on such occasions, which were more highly valued, because they were rare or unexpected. During the period of his youth, he had led a dissolute life; and like "Ranger" in the "Suspicious Husband," had given proofs of his devotion to pleasures, scarcely compatible, as it might have been thought, with the so-

vere studies and profession of the law. To these irregularities, the Duchess of Kingston imprudently ventured to allude, when she said that she could relate "a Canterbury tale," while on her trial at the bar of the House of Lords, when Thurlow filled the post of attorney general. Like Henley, Earl of Northington, his predecessor in the high office of chancellor (the Lord Ringbone of Anstie's "Bath Guide"), Thurlow mingled oaths and execrations with his common discourse. In the afternoon of life, conviviality, wine, and festive society, unbent his mind. It was in company with Mr. Rigby, Lord Gower, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Dundas, and a few other select friends, that he threw off his constitutional severity. At the pay office in Whitehall, where Rigby then resided, Lord Thurlow frequently forgot the double toils annexed to his situation, as head of the law, and as minister of state. Perhaps, on these occasions, when the bottle circulated freely, he sometimes indulged himself in animadversions on men and measures, which were afterwards reported to Fox, and might in some measure justify, or at least explain, the expressions used by the latter, when speaking of Lord Thurlow, in the House of Commons. Possessed of faculties so transcendent, however mingled with human weakness and infirmity, he must always be considered as one of the most distinguished individuals who has sat in the councils of George the Third, at any period of his reign.

We descend now to the less efficient members of the cabinet. Lord Bathurst, who had been at this time president of the council, ever since the resignation of Lord Gower, in the autumn of 1779, was son to the celebrated Allen Bathurst, created a peer by Queen Anne, in 1711; and who might, at the time of his decease, be considered as the last of the great knot of wits and men of genius, that rendered in some measure illustrious the short, as well as inglorious ministry, of Oxford and Bolingbroke. It is to him that Pope addresses the "Third Epistle of his Moral Essays;" to him, in conjunction with Lord Burlington, the famous architect, that he alludes, when he says,

"Who then shall grace, or who improve the soil?"

Who plants like *Bathurst* or who builds like *Boyle*."

He lived to an almost patriarchal age, in possession of nearly all the faculties of his body and mind; passing, the greater part of the evening of his life amidst those superb woods, and under those shades which he had reared, immortalized by *Pope*, at Oakley Grove in Gloucestershire; enjoying the rare felicity to see his son hold the great seal of England. I believe he died in 1775; having by a singular destiny, which perhaps has no parallel in our history, outlived more than sixty years, the princess who raised him to the peerage.

His son may probably be considered as the least able lawyer to whom the great seal of this country was confided, in the course of the eighteenth century. Lord King, who became chancellor under George the First, though he survived his faculties, and is said to have drivelled on the bench, originally displayed eminent intellectual powers; which deservedly raised him from an obscure origin, his father having been a bookseller at Exeter, to that great legal dignity. Yet, Lord Bathurst held his office during seven or eight years; and I have been assured that his decrees, while he presided at the head of the Court of Chancery, were in general regarded by the bar, as wise, just, and unexceptionable. A fact, equally singular as it is true, but, which I know from the best authority, is, that from November 1775, down to June, 1778, comprehending a period of more than two years and a half, when Lord Weymouth and Lord Bathurst sat together in the same cabinet; the former nobleman, and not the chancellor, decided all the law questions brought before them in their *ministerial* capacity. His decisions, dictated by admirable sense, united brevity and perspicuity to the most comprehensive intelligence. Lord Bathurst was, of all the members of administration, the most advanced in age; nor could he, like his father, boast of exemption from the infirmities usually attendant on that period of life. A degree of caducity was visible in his frame, and even his mind did not appear to be wholly exempt from decay. In parlia-

ment, his talents were rarely exerted ; but his unsullied character, and moral qualities, entitled him to universal respect.

The Earl of Dartmouth, as lord privy seal, in right of his office filled a seat in the cabinet. His near affinity to Lord North, and that circumstance alone, placed him ostensibly in administration ; Lord Dartmouth's mother, Viscountess Lewisham, having married, after her first husband's decease, the Earl of Guildford. In his public character, whether in, or out of parliament, he excited no share of general attention, and lays claim to no place in the history of his own time.

The secretary at war, on the contrary, though not possessing a seat in the cabinet, constituted an object of universal consideration, and attracted all eyes towards him. Mr. Charles Jenkinson, since created Earl of Liverpool, occupied in 1781 that employment. Few persons in the course of this long and eventful reign, have played so important a part behind the curtain of state. Still fewer individuals have attained to such eminence, personal as well as political, unaided by the advantages of high birth, or of natural connexions. Descended from a very respectable family, that had been raised to the baronetage by Charles the Second in 1661, his paternal fortune was nevertheless of the most limited description, when he commenced his career. But, his talents, which were admirably adapted to secure his future elevation, soon dispersed the clouds that attended the morning of his life. They recommended him to Lord Bute, then at the head of the treasury, who made Mr. Jenkinson his private secretary ; and through the interposition of that nobleman, he became not only personally known to the sovereign, but highly acceptable at St. James's. When Lord Bute withdrew in 1763, from the post of first minister, Mr. Jenkinson still continued to occupy the same confidential employment under his successor, George Grenville ; nor was he displaced till Lord Rockingham came into power, in July, 1765 ; when Burke succeeded him in that situation. Those who supposed or asserted, that a secret communication was still maintained be-

tween Lord Bute and the king ; as well as all those who chose to consider Lord Bute as the efficient, though concealed, mover of the machine of government ; accused Mr. Jenkinson of forming the confidential medium, through which that intercourse was principally maintained. So delicate a trust, if we assume its existence, necessarily exposed him to popular clamour, as being equally unconstitutional in itself, and dangerous to the liberties of the British people. But, in proportion to the obloquy that such an imputation excited, was the respect that it attracted.

As Lord Bute gradually retired into the shade of private life, and became insensibly forgotten, Mr. Jenkinson proportionably came forward in his own person, and on his own proper merits. Throughout the whole period of Lord North's administration, from 1770 down to 1782, his intercourse with the king, and even his influence over the royal mind, were assumed to be constant, progressive, commensurate with, and sometimes paramount to, or subversive of, the measures proposed by the first minister. However difficult of proof such assertions were, and however contrary, as I believe, they were to truth or fact, they did not operate the less forcibly on the bulk of the nation, and were not less eagerly credited by men of all parties. No denials on the part of persons in power, could erase the impression, which newspapers and pamphlets industriously circulated through the kingdom. In the House of Commons, where their operation was widely felt, the speakers in opposition continually affected to consider Lord North, together with the whole cabinet, as played on by unseen agents, who alone possessed the secret of state, and the real confidence of the crown. "The noble lord," said Fox, when addressing parliament on the 26th. of March, 1781, where I was present and heard him, "would never have been invited to accept his present office, except under the condition of promising to execute the measures *chalked out* to him respecting America. He would not have been suffered to remain in office, if he had declined to carry on the war with the colonies. His acquiescence in, and submission to those

weak, as well as wicked measures, in madly beginning, and more madly persevering in that accursed war, *is the price of his place.*" Lord North, though he rose when Fox sat down, and though he answered many other passages of Fox's speech with great ability, descending to the most minute details, yet neither denied this charge, nor expressed any indignation at such an assertion. His silence emboldened his opponents, who did not scruple even to designate Mr. Jenkinson as the depositary of this mysterious and undefined influence; if not exclusively, yet in an eminent degree. Of course, whenever he rose to speak, all attention was absorbed by him, as being the supposed oracle who knew, and might promulgate those hidden truths of state, in which ministers themselves, it was pretended, were not always allowed to participate, and of which he constituted the only certain channel.

At this time he was about fifty-four years of age, and in his person he rose above the common height; but his lank limbs and figure were destitute of elegance or grace. The expression of his countenance I find it difficult to describe, as without having in his face any lines strongly marked, it was not destitute of deep intelligence. Reflection and caution seemed to be stamped on every feature; while his eyes, like those of Don Manuel Ordonez in "*Gil Blas*," were usually, even in conversation, directed downwards towards the earth. Something impervious and inscrutable seemed to accompany and to characterize his demeanour, which awakened curiosity, while it repressed or discouraged inquiry. His enemies asserted that he resembled a dark lanthorn; and as much as the human figure or physiognomy can ever be supposed to offer such a strange similarity, unquestionably it existed in him. Even the twinkling motion of his eyelids, which he half-closed from time to time in speaking, made the allusion, however fanciful, more close and striking. Nor should it be omitted, when attempting to transmit to posterity an imperfect outline of the person and address of this celebrated nobleman, that his head continually revolving on its axis while he addressed

his discourse either to the House of Commons, or to any individual, moved in a perpetual circle. His manners were polite, calm, and unassuming; grave, if not cold; but not distant, without any mixture of pride or affectation. In society, though reserved, he was not silent; and though guarded on certain topics, communicative on ordinary subjects. He always appeared as if desirous to disclaim, and to reject the consideration, which he involuntarily attracted. It was not difficult, on a short acquaintance, to discover that he had read men more than books; though he had received an academic education, had been originally destined for the clerical profession, and had even been admitted to deacon's orders. Yet he neither manifested the elegant information only to be acquired by visiting foreign countries, nor the classical ideas or images derived from a familiarity with the productions of antiquity. Even his knowledge of modern history was rather financial and commercial, than general or critical. But in recompense for these deficiencies of an ornamental kind, he possessed more useful and solid attainments, calculated to raise their possessor in life.

No man in official situation, was supposed to understand better the principles of trade, navigation, manufactures, and revenue. He had written and published on those subjects, in a manner that sufficiently proved his profound acquaintance with them. Supple, patient, mild, laborious, persevering, attentive to improve the favourable occasions which presented themselves, and always cool, he never lost the ground that he had once gained. As a speaker in the House of Commons, he rose seldom, unless called out by particular circumstances; nor, when on his legs, did he ever weary the patience of his auditors. No ray of wit, humour, or levity, pervaded his speeches. He neither introduced into them metaphors, digressions, nor citations. All was fact and business. His language had nothing in it animated or elevated. Scarcely was it indeed always correct, or exempt from some little inelegancies and redundancies of diction. But it never was defective in the essentials of perspicuity, brevity, and thorough information. He used to re-

mind me of a man crossing a torrent on stones : and so carefully did he place his foot at every step, as never once to wet his shoe. I have seen him, before a crowded house, acquit himself with wonderful dexterity, while secretary at war, when officially addressing parliament. Such qualifications, even independent of the supposed favour of the sovereign, necessarily rendered him an object of respect and the attention to every party.

Rigby, sole paymaster of the forces, occupied scarcely an inferior place to Jenkinson in the public estimation, and seemed to fill a much higher, in his opinion of himself. As if he had meant to show that he acted independently of ministers, and was above their controul, he never sat on this government side of the House of Commons ; but he did not on that account give the less unqualified support on all occasions to administration. Sheridan, with equal severity and wit, animadverted on this line of conduct, during the course of the debate on the 8th of March, 1782 ; when Rigby, though he admitted that Lord North would act properly by resigning, yet added, that he should vote for that nobleman's continuance in power. "The right honourable gentleman," observed Sheridan, "has long declared that the American war ought to be abandoned, but he has invariably voted for its prosecution. I nevertheless believe that he is very sincere. I doubt not that as a member of this house, as a privy counsellor, and as a private individual, he has always detested the war with America, as much as any man. But, unfortunately, he has never been able to succeed in persuading the *paymaster*, that it is a bad war. And in whatever character he may *speak*, it is always the *paymaster* who *votes* within these walls. The attacks which he sometimes makes on his noble friend at the head of administration, are in fact therefore only an ingenious mode of giving him support. They are only metaphorical : but, *Aye* and *No* are speeches that do not admit of a *trope*." The obtrusive manner in which, at the levee, he often thrust himself between persons of the greatest rank, in order more expeditiously to approach the sovereign,

sufficiently indicated the value in which he held his personal appearance in St. James's. When in his place in the House of Commons, he was invariably habited in a full dress suit of clothes, commonly of a purple or dark colour, without lace or embroidery, close buttoned, with his sword thrust through the pocket. Corpulent in his person, he was not, on that account, unwieldy or inactive. His countenance was very expressive but not of genius : still less did it indicate timidity or modesty. All the comforts of the pay office seemed to be eloquently depicted in it ; and the "*lumen purpureum*" which beamed from his suffused features, served as a comment on the text of "Junius," when he panegyricizes the Duke of Bedford's solitary protection of "blushing merit," in Mr. Rigby's person. His manner rough, yet frank ; bold and overbearing, if not insolent, but manly ; admirably set off whatever sentiments he uttered in parliament.

Like Jenkinson, he borrowed neither from ancient, nor from modern authors. His eloquence was altogether his own, simple, strong and natural ; addressed, not to the fancy, but to the plain comprehension of his hearers. Whatever he meant, he expressed indeed without circumlocution, or declamation. There was a happy audacity about his forehead, which must have been the gift of nature : art could never attain to it by any efforts. He seemed neither to fear, nor even to respect the house, whose composition, as a body, he well knew ; and to the members of which assembly, he never appeared to give credit for any portion of virtue, patriotism, or public spirit. Far from concealing these sentiments, he insinuated, or even pronounced them without disguise ; and from *his* lips they neither excited surprise, nor even commonly awakened reprehension. Fox usually treated Rigby with great courtesy ; and on some occasions, even with a degree of attention, approaching to predilection or regard :—sentiments which always met with a suitable return. Rigby had succeeded his father, Lord Holland, in the pay office, after a short interval of three years. But Sheridan observed no such management or delicacy towards the paymaster. On

the same day that he had commented with such ingenious severity relative to the inconsistent, but, invariable support extended by Rigby to administration: Sheridan animadverted in strong terms, on the disrespectful, or rather, the contemptuous manner, in which, on all occasions, he mentioned the constituent body of the people. "That right honourable member," said he, "treats the petitions recently presented from various parts of the kingdom, praying for a termination of the American war, in a way highly indecent, and at the same time equally impolitic. The people begin to be sufficiently irritated, and gentlemen will act wisely not to make use of contumelious expressions towards them, in this assembly. They have borne much, and it may perhaps be prudent not to insult their patience." Rigby, though not easily arrested or intimidated, yet submitted in silence to Sheridan's reprehensions of his conduct.

If Jenkinson might be esteemed the secret oracle, to whom all those men denominated *the king's friends* constantly looked for direction in difficult cases, as occasionally arose; Rigby was the avowed standard round which they rallied. Their numbers were considerable, though differently reported; and they were supposed by no means to take their directions implicitly on all occasions, from the treasury. "Junius" treats them with his accustomed severity. "Ministers," says he, when speaking of parliament, "are no longer the public servants of the state, but, the private domestics of the sovereign. One particular class of men are permitted to call themselves *the king's friends*, as if the body of the people were the king's enemies: or as if his majesty looked for a resource or consolation in the attachment of a few favourites, against the general contempt and detestation of his subjects. Edward and Richard the Second, made the same distinction between the collective body of the people, and a contemptible party who surrounded the throne." Even in the House of Commons, *the king's friends* were alluded to by name. I remember, on the 15th of March, 1782, which formed the last debate that took place within those walls, previous to Lord North's resigna-

tion; a member of opposition, Mr. Harrison, one of the two representatives for Grimsby, mentioned them without circumlocution. Lord North, as well as Sir Grey Cooper and Robinson, the two secretaries of the treasury, having declared that they had not named or recommended any individual for a share in the loan recently negotiated; Harrison observed, that he gave them credit for the truth of their assertion. "But," continued he, "I entertain too good an opinion of the gratitude of the gentlemen who have contracted for the whole of the loan, not to suppose that they will anticipate the noble lord's wishes, by giving to such members of this house as may desire it, a sufficient share of it to retain them steadily in that list, which by way of pre-eminence is denominated by the honourable appellation of *the king's friends*. An appellation no doubt given, in order to distinguish them from the factious individuals who have uniformly resisted the salutary measures of his majesty's ministers, which have brought the country into its present envious situation!" No notice was taken of Harrison's allusion, by any member of administration. As this body of men grew up and increased with the progress of the American war, so with its termination, they seemed to become extinct. After Pitt's victory over "the coalition," and the convocation of a new parliament in 1784, *the king's friends* were found in every part of the House of Commons. But, it was not so in 1781, under Lord North, when Jenkinson and Rigby were supposed, however erroneously, to be often more in the real secret of the crown, than the first minister himself. A very select party usually adjourned to the pay office, after late evenings in the House of Commons, where the good cheer and the claret obliterated all painful recollections connected with public affairs.

The post of treasury of the navy was held by Mr. Welbore Ellis, whom we have since seen, after ostensibly filling the office of colonial secretary of state, for a few weeks on the resignation of Lord George Germain; and after occupying during several years a distinguished place in the ranks of opposition; raised in the winter of life, by Mr. Pitt,

like so many other individuals, to the dignity of a British peer. He might be considered as the *Nestor* of the ministry, and of the House of Commons. In his figure, manner, and deportment, the very essence of form, he regularly took his place on the treasury bench, dressed in all points as if he had been going to the drawing-room at St. James's. His eloquence was of the same description as himself, precise, grave, and constrained; unilluminated by taste, and calculated to convince, more than to exhilarate or electrify his audience. The respect due to his age, character, and employment, rather than the force or novelty of his arguments, commonly secured him a patient hearing; but he was neither listened to with enthusiasm, nor regretted, when he ceased actively to exert his abilities in support of the measures of administration.

The attorney general, Wallace, as well as Mansfield, solicitor general, were men of acknowledged talents, parliamentary, no less than professional. The latter manifested great energies of mind and character. But it might be esteemed in some degree their misfortune, that having recently succeeded two persons so eminent as Thurlow and Wedderburn, the house could not avoid judging of them more by comparison with their predecessors, than by their own intrinsic merit. Both the attorney and solicitor general were moreover obscured, in the superior intellectual powers, that characterised Mr. Dundas, then lord advocate of Scotland and since created Viscount Melville. His figure, tall, manly, and advantageous; his countenance, open, cheerful, and pleasingly expressive, though tinged with convivial purple, prejudiced in his favour. Neither the Scotticisms with which his speeches abounded, nor an accent peculiarly northern, as well as uncouth, could prevent his assuming and maintaining that conspicuous place in the ministerial ranks, to which his pre-eminent parts entitled him. These very defects of elocution or of diction, by the ludicrous effect that they produced, became often converted into advantages; as they unavoidably operated to force a smile from his bitterest opponents, and chequered with momentary

good humour, the personalities of debate. The apparent frankness of his manner, which formed a striking contrast with Jenkinson's guarded reserve; conciliated or disarmed in some measure those, whose political opinions were most adverse to government. Never did any man conceal deeper views of every kind, under the appearance of careless inattention to self-interest. In him was exemplified the remark, that "*Ars est celare artem*;" and the seeming want of caution or artifice in his ordinary intercourse, capacitated him for contending successfully with men of more habitual self-command. His voice, strong, clear, and sonorous, enabled him to surmount the noise of a popular assembly, and almost to enforce attention, at moments of the greatest clamour or impatience. Far from shunning the post of danger, he always seemed to court it; and was never deterred from stepping forward to the assistance of ministers, by the violence of opposition, by the unpopularity of the measure to be defended, or by the difficulty of the attempt.

His speeches, able, animated, and argumentative, were delivered without hesitation, and unembarrassed by any timidity. If they displayed no ornaments of style, and no beauties of composition, it was impossible to accuse them of any deficiency in sterling sense, or in solid ability. He was indeed, without excepting Lord George Germain himself, the most powerful auxiliary whom Lord North could boast of possessing in the lower house. Though elevated in the trammels of Scotch jurisprudence, and long accustomed to plead at the bar of that country; his mind, which disdained so confined a sphere of action, propelled him to try his force on a greater theatre. Animated by this resolution, he quitted the study of law for the career of politics; and in defiance of every impediment, abandoning the *Court of Session*; ventured to seek fortune in an English House of Commons. Conscious of his own intellectual superiority, and guided by a profound, but well-regulated ambition, he already aspired to offices and situations, seemingly beyond the pale of his legal profession. India, he thought, and wisely thought, opened to him a field

worthy of his talents; and the state of danger, as well as of disorder, into which those extensive dominions had been thrown, by the mismanagement or incapacity of the East India Company's servants, particularly on the Coast of Coromandel, necessarily brought their affairs under parliamentary discussion. The occasion appeared favourable, and he availed himself of it with prompt decision. Placed, as he was soon afterwards, at the head of a secret committee, appointed to inquire into the causes of the war existing in the Carnatic; he there laid down the foundation of the power which we have since seen him exercise as a minister of that department, under the administration of Mr. Pitt, during many successive years. Expensive from natural character, by no means averse to pleasure, or insensible to female charms; always blending conviviality in some measure with business, and regardless of money, except as constituting the source of enjoyment; he never failed to form one of the festive party which met at the Pay Office. Closely connected in politics, no less than by habits of life and private friendship, with Rigby; they might be said to act indeed in secret union, and to lend each other a mutual assistance on every occasion.

The two secretaries of the treasury occupied a very different place in the scale of ministerial, or rather, of parliamentary importance, under Lord North's administration. Sir Grey Cooper, with the single exception of the Cornish boroughs in the interest of the crown, and the revenues of the Duchy itself, both which were entrusted to his superintendence during the minority of the Prince of Wales; was confined to the mere official duties of his post. But, Robinson might be considered as one of the most active and essential functionaries of the executive government. I knew him intimately, both in, and out of office. A native of the county of Westmoreland, and descended from an ancient family of highland origin; though unadorned with any accomplishments of education, or advantages of address, he nevertheless displayed many qualifications that fitted him admirably for his situation. His

person was coarse, inelegant, and somewhat inclined to corpulency: but he possessed solid judgment, and suavity of temper, combined with plain, unaffected, and conciliating manners; was capable of great application, as well as of steady friendship, and by no means wanted decision of character.

On him devolved that delicate and most important department, then known by the denomination of *the management of the House of Commons*: a branch of administration, or rather, of secret service, unfortunately interwoven with, and inseparable from, the genius of the British constitution; perhaps, of every form of government in which democracy, or popular representation, makes an essential part. Towards the close of an unfortunate war, when the ministry was threatened with annual, or almost monthly dissolution, and when a numerous opposition acquired strength, in proportion to the national misfortunes; this management required unceasing vigilance. Robinson was the depository of the "*livre rouge*," where were supposed, or asserted to be contained, the names of those members of one, if not of both Houses of Parliament, who were retained by, and devoted to, the administration. But, it was not only in the secret arrangements of official business, that he manifested dexterity and energy. He more than once exercised with equal ability and effect, as I know, the functions of higher officers of state. It was he, who, on the refusal of Lord Weymouth, then secretary for the southern department; countersigned the secret orders, which were sent out to Madras, over land, on the 14th of April, 1778, by the chairman and deputy chairman of the East India Company, authorizing the immediate attack of Pondicherry. To the manly decision of this timely measure, which is not the less true, because it may appear improbable, or because venal and ignorant reviewers have declared it "a perfect impossibility;" a measure embraced by Lord North at a moment when the war with France, though inevitable and impending, was not actually commenced; we owed the capture of that important settlement, the chief establishment of the enemy on the Coromandel coast, which gave us an

ascendant over the French, during the whole future course of hostilities in India.

After having surveyed the members of the cabinet, and the principal parliamentary characters on the ministerial side of the House of Commons, it is natural to proceed to the great individuals who composed the opposition in that assembly. Mr. Fox, from the union of birth, connexions, talents, and eloquence, which met in his person, had become, in the beginning of 1781, confessedly, without any competitor, their leader. Having attained his thirty-second year, he consequently united all the ardour of youth, to the experience acquired in maturer life. It was impossible to contemplate the lineaments of his countenance, without instantly perceiving the indelible marks of genius. His features, in themselves dark, harsh, and saturnine, like those of Charles the Second, from whom he descended in the maternal line; derived nevertheless a sort of majesty, from the addition of two black and shaggy eyebrows, which sometimes concealed, but more frequently developed, the workings of his mind. Even these features, however seemingly repulsive, yet did not readily assume the expression of anger, or of enmity; whereas they frequently, and as it were naturally, relaxed into a smile, the effect of which became irresistible, because it appeared to be the index of a benevolent and complacent disposition. His figure, broad, heavy, and inclined to corpulency, appeared destitute of all elegance or grace, except the portion conferred on it by the emanations of intellect, which at times diffused over his whole person, when he was speaking, the most impassioned animation. In his dress, which had constituted an object of his attention, earlier in life, he had then become negligent to a degree not altogether excusable in a man, whose very errors or defects produced admirers and imitators. At five and twenty I have seen him apparelled *en petit maitre*, with a hat and feather, even in the House of Commons; but in 1781, he constantly, or at least usually, wore in that assembly, a blue frock coat, and a buff waistcoat, neither of which seemed in general new, and sometimes appeared to be thread-

bare. Nor ought it to be forgotten that these colours, like the *white rose* formerly worn by the adherents of the family of *Stuart*, or the *Corsican violet* of more modern times, then constituted the distinguishing badge or uniform of Washington and the American insurgents. In this dress he always took his seat, not upon the front opposition bench, but, on the third row behind, close to that pillar supporting the gallery, which is nearest to the speaker's chair. It was not till 1782, or rather till the beginning of 1783, that, with Lord North by his side, he first began to sit on the opposition bench, technically so denominated in ordinary language. I am sensible that these minute particulars are in themselves unimportant, but they nevertheless approximate and identify the object. And that object is Mr. Fox.

His paternal descent was by no means illustrious, nor was the elevation of his family sufficiently ancient, to shed over it that species of genealogical respect, only to be derived from the lapse of time. *Collins*, indeed, very equivocally observes in his "*Peerage*," when treating of the *Barony of Holland*, that "there were *Foxes* in England "before the Norman conquest." But, I have always understood that his grandfather, who rose by his abilities to considerable eminence, and was knighted by the name of Sir Stephen Fox, as well as raised to the dignity of a privy councillor; had been a chorister boy in the Cathedral of Salisbury, when in 1651 he accompanied Lord Wilmot to France, after the defeat of Charles the Second at the battle of Worcester. It has been maintained, and I have heard it asserted, that their names were originally Palafox; that they formed a branch of that noble Arragonese family, so distinguished in the present age, by the glorious defence of Saragossa; and that they first came into this country in 1588, when one of the Spanish Armada being stranded on our coast, the survivors, among whom was a Palafox, settled in England. I have however always regarded this story as a mere fable. Sir Stephen Fox, towards the end of a long life, during which he made great advances to honours and dignities, having married, became at seventy-five years of age, the

father of two sons born at the same birth. These twins were both in process of time elevated to the peerage; a fact which had antecedently been realized to a certain degree, in the *Cecil*, as well as in the *Herbert* family, under James the First. Charles the First again exhibited it in the house of *Rich*; and we have since seen it exemplified in the families of *Walpole*, of *Percy*, of *Hood*, of *Wellesley*, and various others.

While the elder son of Sir Stephen Fox was created Earl of Ilchester, by George the Second; the youngest, Henry, acquired a barony in the beginning of the present reign, by the title of Lord Holland. He was unquestionably a man of very eminent attainments, possessing a classic mind, cultivated by study, adorned by travel, and illuminated by a taste for poetry, as well as all the elegant arts. But, he is better known in the political history of the late reign, where he performed a principal part in the ministerial ranks, no less than in the parliamentary annals, till he sunk under the superior ascendant, sustained by the irresistible eloquence of the first Earl of Chatham, as Antony's genius is said to have been rebuked under that of Augustus. Of immeasurable ambition, and equally insatiable of wealth, Lord Holland was enabled, by possessing the lucrative post of paymaster of the forces, which he held during several years in time of war, and subsequent to the peace of Fontainebleau down to 1765, to accumulate an immense fortune. It was not however attained without great unpopularity and obloquy, which accompanied him to the grave; and exposed him to much, perhaps to unmerited, abuse or accusation. His moral character did not indeed stand as high in the national estimation, either in a public, or in a private point of view, as did his abilities. But he cemented the greatness of his family, by allying himself in marriage with the ducal house of Lenox.

Of his three sons, Lord Holland early perceived the extraordinary talents which nature had conferred on the second; and in the fond anticipation of that son's future political elevation, exhausted on his education every effort which might expand or mature his opening capacity.

But he adopted a vicious and dangerous principle, in ordering that the boy should neither be contradicted or punished, for almost any acts in his power to commit, of peurile misconduct or indiscretion. "Let nothing be done to break his spirit," said Lord Holland; "the world will effect that business soon enough." When he made the tour of France and Italy, he was accompanied by a gentleman of eminent parts, Mr. George Macartney, who afterwards, towards the close of a life passed in the public service, attained, himself, in his own person, to the peerage. We may see in the letters of Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, the species of impression which Mr. Fox's endowments, and the sallies of his juvenile impetuosity made on the minds of the Parisians. They seem to have considered him as a sort of phenomenon, which dazzled and astonished, more than it pleased or delighted them. Before he attained fully to the age at which he could constitutionally vote, though he might speak, in parliament, his father procured him a seat in the House of Commons; and his talents, aided by his connexions, placed him towards the close of 1772, on the ministerial bench, as a member of the board of treasury. He occupied the situation about two years.

This early association to Lord North's administration, might nevertheless be considered as an unfortunate circumstance in its results, since it involved him in the unpopularity attached to various measures then adopted by the government, which subsequently led to a rupture with America. That even previous to his attainment or acceptance of office, he was regarded by the enemies of administration, as a devoted partizan of ministry, in training for future desperate service, is evident from the manner in which "Junius" speaks of him. Writing to the Duke of Grafton, in June, 1771, he says: "In vain would he (the king) have looked around him for another character so consummate as yours. Lord Mansfield shrinks from his principles. His ideas of government perhaps go farther than your own, but his heart disgraces the theory of his understanding. — *Charles Fox is yet in blossom*; and as for Mr. Wed-

derburn, there is something about him which even treachery cannot trust." These ministerial fetters did not, however, long detain him in parliamentary bondage. The sarcastic mode of expression chosen by Lord North, to communicate Mr. Fox's dismissal from the treasury board, is well known. "His majesty," observed the first minister to some persons near him, "has named new commissioners of the treasury, among whom I do not see the name of the Hon. Charles James Fox." From that period, having enlisted under the banners of opposition, and being aided by the errors or misfortunes of the American war, he attained in the course of about six years, to the highest eminence among the formidable body of men who then opposed the measures of the crown.

Pleasures of every description, to which his constitution or inclinations impelled him, divided, however, with political pursuits, the early portion of his life; some of which, if fame report truly, might have furnished matter for a new "*Atantis*." It may be curious, nevertheless, for those persons who only remember him either as a leading member of the minority, or in office as minister, to contemplate Mr. Fox when at the head of the *ton*, who were then denominated "*Macaronis*." The author of the "*Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers*," published, I believe, early in 1773; which production is commonly, though perhaps erroneously, attributed to *Mason*; describes or produces Fox under that character. After enumerating, with vast felicity of humour and satire, the Asiatic diversions supposed to be exhibited for the amusement of the British sovereign, he then concludes; I cite by memory:

"But hark! the shouts of battle sound from far!

The Jews and Macaronis are at war.

The Jews prevail, and thund'ring from the stocks,

They seize, they bind, they circumcise Charles Fox.

Fair Schwellenbergen smiles the sport to see,
And all the maids of honour cry to he."

Neither the pleasures of refined, or of licentious love, nor the social conviviality of the table, although he might oc-

asionally indulge in each of these gratifications, constituted, however, his predominant passion. All his inclinations, from a very early age, seemed to be concentrated in a more fatal attachment to play. In the prosecution of that propensity, he had squandered prodigious sums before his father's decease, with which Lord Holland's paternal fondness furnished him. To the same pursuit, or rather rage, he subsequently sacrificed a sinecure place of two thousand pounds a year for life, the clerkship of the Pells in Ireland; of which he came into possession by the demise of his elder brother, Stephen, the second Lord Holland, in December, 1774. After holding it scarcely ten months, he sold it to Mr. Charles Jenkinson, since better known as Earl of Liverpool. He disposed, in a similar manner, of a fine estate and a magnificent house, situated at Kingsgate, in the Isle of Thanet, which Lord Holland had embellished with classic taste, at an expense that could only have been furnished by a paymaster of the forces. On a bleak promontory, the North Foreland, projecting into the German Ocean, destitute of a single tree, and perpetually swept by the east winds, that nobleman constructed a splendid villa, worthy of Lucullus. A colonnade, such as Ictinus might have raised by order of Pericles, extended in front of the edifice; but which has since been demolished. This superb retreat, in consequence of Fox's infatuation to the gaming table, speedily passed into the possession of *Powell*, who had been cashier in the paymaster general's office under Lord Holland, and who subsequently finished so tragically his career. The office of clerk of the Pells had been procured for Mr. Fox, as the estate at Kingsgate had been bequeathed to him, by his father. We must confess that these scandalous irregularities of conduct, or rather vices of character, remind us more of Timon and of Alcibiades, than of Pericles or Demosthenes.

Fox was not one of those dupes who never understand the principles of any game. On the contrary he played admirably both at whist, and at picquet; with such skill indeed, that by the general admission of Brookes's club, he

might have made four thousand pounds a year, as they calculated, at those games, if he would have confined himself to them. But, his misfortune arose from playing at games of chance, particularly at faro. After eating and drinking plentifully, he sat down to the faro table, and inevitably rose a loser. Once indeed, and only once, he won about eight thousand pounds in the course of a single evening. Part of the money he paid away to his creditors, and the remainder he lost again almost immediately, in the same manner. The late Mr. Boothby, so well known during many years in the first walks of fashion and dissipation; himself an irreclaimable gamester, and an intimate friend of Fox; yet appreciated him with much severity, though with equal truth. "Charles," observ'd he, "is unquestionably a man of first-rate talents, but, so deficient in judgment, as never to have succeeded in any object during his whole life. He loved only three things; women, play, and politics. Yet, at no period, did he ever form a creditable connexion with a woman. He lost his whole fortune at the gaming-table; and with the exception of about eleven months of his life, he has remained always in opposition." It is difficult to dispute the justice of this portrait. Perhaps we might add to Boothby's picture, that towards the close of his career, Fox emulated the distinction of an historian; in the pursuit of which object he made laborious efforts, and with a view to facilitate or to attain it, he appears principally to have undertaken his journey to Paris in 1802. Whether he succeeded better than in the former attempts, posterity will determine: but he would certainly have attained a more elevated place in the temple of history, by imitating the line of Zenophon or of Sallust in antiquity, who commemorated the transactions of their own times, than by taking for his subject, the reign of James the Second.

The first Lord Holland died when his son Charles was about twenty-four; and before he attained his thirtieth year, he had completely dissipated every shilling that he could either command, or could procure by the most ruinous expedients. He had even undergone at times, many

of the severest privations annexed to the vicissitudes that mark a gamester's progress; frequently wanting money to defray his common diurnal wants of the most pressing nature. Topham Beauclerk, a man of high birth, of pleasure, and of letters, who lived much in Fox's society at that period of his life; used to affirm, that no person could form an idea of the extremities to which he had been driven in order to raise money, after losing his last guinea at the faro table. He has been reduced for successive days, to such distress, as to be under a necessity of having recourse to the waiters of *Brookes's* club, to lend him assistance. The very chairmen whom he was unable to pay, used to dun him for their arrears. All dignity of character, and independence of mind, must have been lost amidst these scenes of ruinous dissipation. In 1781, he might, however, be considered as an extinct volcano; — for, the pecuniary aliment that had fed the flame, was long consumed. He never indeed affected or attempted to conceal the state of poverty into which his passion for play had plunged him. Even on his legs in the House of Commons, I have heard him frequently allude to it. When Lord Holland, his father's accounts, as paymaster of the forces, were brought in some measure before the view of parliament, during the session of 1781; Fox observed, that as one of the executors of that deceased nobleman, he lamented the inability under which his nephew lay to make any transfer of property, while those accounts remained unsettled. "*Perhaps,*" added he, "*I have not, myself, any more estates to sell; but I nevertheless feel for the persons who have purchased of me the landed property bequeathed me under my father's will; the titles to which must always remain in a certain degree precarious, while his executors have not obtained a quietus from the exchequer.*"

Only a few days later in the same session, on the 12th of June, 1781, Lord George Germain, having asserted in the course of his speech, that "ministers had some property to lose, as well as the gentlemen on the other side of the house; and in ruining their country, as they were accused of doing,

they must involve themselves personally in destruction," Fox answered, "*It is well known that I have no stake to lose*, but that circumstances will not abate my zeal for the public welfare." Rigby, who probably began already to foresee the termination of Lord North's administration as rapidly approaching, if not imminent, paid Fox many compliments on the occasion. "The honourable gentleman," said Rigby, "represents himself as an insignificant person, possessing no property, and having no stake in the country. No man, in my opinion, possesses a more important stake. His talents, his connexions, and his prospects, constitute a far more valuable possession, than a rent roll of many thousands. He is an honour to his country, which feels a corresponding public interest in him." These flattering expressions, though received by Fox with urbanity, he did not the less disclaim in his reply; adding, "that he could not accept any testimonies of good will shown to himself, which were accompanied with censures on his friends." At the time of which I speak, Fox occupied a house or lodgings in St. James's street, close to the club at *Brookes's*, where he passed almost every hour which was not devoted to the House of Commons; and during Lord North's administration, parliament usually remained sitting, with short adjournments, from November till July. That club might then be considered as the rallying point and rendezvous of the opposition; where, while faro, whist, and suppers prolonged the night, the principal members of the minority in both houses met, in order to compare their information, or to concert or mature their parliamentary measures.

It must not, however, be imagined that either Fox, or the club that he frequented, could altogether escape some severe animadversions, on the part of men who contemplated both the one and the other as objects of moral censure and reprobation. I recollect that during the session of 1781, Mansfield, then solicitor general, having brought a bill into the House of Commons, for the prevention of certain abuses practised on the Sunday; Martin, member for Tewksbury, one of the most conscientious and honest men who ever sat in parliament, while he

highly commended it, expressed his concern that "the gaming houses which were open every Sunday in the immediate vicinity of St. James's palace, had not attracted the notice of the learned framer of the bill." He went on to say that "he was astonished how men who passed their whole time in a continued round of offence to morality, could reconcile it to their consciences, to come down to that assembly, and there make laws for the suppression of similar, or even smaller violations of decency among their inferiors in rank and fortune." No notice whatever being taken of these remarks, Martin, in a subsequent stage of the bill, spoke out in still bolder language when Fox was present. He called on the solicitor-general to answer, why those abominable nurseries of gambling in St. James's street, were not suppressed? "They are," continued he, "the bane of our young men of rank, who, becoming first necessitous, lie open to the seductions of a minister, whose pernicious measures can only be sustained by corruption." Then designating Fox in colours too accurate to be mistaken, he admitted that there might be some shining exceptions to this depravity. "But," added he, "if there are any individuals of pre-eminent abilities in this house, who might be the scourge and the terror of any bad administration, I trust that the learned gentleman, who is himself a representative of one of the two universities, will exert his best endeavours to extinguish so crying and so destructive an evil." These sentiments were re-echoed, though in less pointed terms, from other parts of the house. In answer, the solicitor-general observed, that "no country in Europe could boast of better laws against gaming, than were to be found in our statute books; but, that if men of rank and distinction were determined to commit crimes which from their nature must be perpetrated in private, no law could thoroughly reach the evil." Fox making no reply, though the allusions to himself were palpable, Sheridan rose, and with great address turned aside the weapon, of which he could not altogether blunt the point. Unwilling to offend Martin, who generally voted with opposition, Sheridan directed his attack

against the administration. "I trust," said he, "that the learned gentleman who presents himself to the house on this day, in the double capacity of a *Cato* and a *Petronius*, at once the *ensor morum* and the *arbiter elegantiarum* of the age, will turn his attention towards the suppression of a species of gaming more destructive to morals than any other, and which is nevertheless patronized by the legislature. I mean lotteries, which, by suspending all the pursuits of industry, introduce among the lower orders of people every species of depravity. This would be, indeed, an object worthy of his exertion." Mansfield was in his turn silent, and the debate took a new turn. Unquestionably, the club at *White's*, as well as at *Brookes's*, was designated by Martin, when he denounced the evil itself, as he spoke in the plural number. But no member of the cabinet being accused of a passion for the gaming-table, though more than one among them frequented *White's*, the blow fell heavily on Fox, Fitzpatrick, Burgoyne, and their associates, while it scarcely glanced on ministers.

Nature, besides the extraordinary endowments of mind which she conferred on Fox, had given him likewise a constitution originally capable of prodigious exertion. But he had already impaired his bodily powers, by every variety of excess, added to the most violent mental agitations. These acts of imprudence had produced their inevitable consequences, though for some time counteracted by youth, or obviated by medical aid. As early as 1781, Mr. Fox was already attacked with frequent complaints of the stomach and bowels, attended by acute pain: to moderate the symptoms of which, he usually had recourse to laudanum. The strongest frame must indeed have sunk under such physical and moral exhausture, if he had allowed himself no interval of relaxation or repose. But, happily, his passion for some of the amusements and sports of the country, almost rivalled his attachment to the gaming-table. No sooner had the shooting season commenced, than he constantly repaired to Norfolk. Lord Robert Spencer generally accompanied him; and after visit-

ing various friends, they sometimes hired a small house in the town of Thetford, rose at an early hour, and passed the whole day with a fowling-piece in their hands, among coveys of partridges and pheasants, for successive weeks, during the autumn. These salutary occupations never failed of restoring the health that he had lost in St. James's street, and in the House of Commons.

Nor did the rage for play ever engross his whole mind, or wholly absorb his faculties. Nature had implanted in his bosom many elevated inclinations, which, though overpowered and oppressed for a time, yet, as he advanced in life, continually acquired strength. If ambition formed the first, the love of letters constituted the second, of these passions. When he contemplated the extent of his own parliamentary talents, and compared them with those of Lord North, or of every other individual in either house: it was impossible for him not to perceive the moral certainty of his attaining by perseverance, in the course of a few years, almost any public situation to which he might aspire. In the possession and enjoyment of power, he necessarily anticipated the recovery of that independence which he had sacrificed at the gaming-table; as well as the means of recompensing the zealous friendship or devotion of his numerous adherents.

No man in public life, ever possessed more determined friends, or exercised over them a more unbounded influence; though he was by no means as tractable and amenable to reason, or to entreaty, on many occasions, as the apparent suavity of his disposition seemed to indicate. Even interest could not always bend him to a compliance with the dictates of his judgment, nor expostulation induce him to pay the most ordinary attention to persons who had materially served him. In 1784, at the election of a member for Westminster, which was very obstinately contested; Horace Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, whose age and delicate health prevented him from almost ever leaving his own house; yet submitted to be carried in a sedan chair, from Berkley Square to the hustings, in Covent Garden, to vote for him. But no remonstrances

could prevail on Fox to leave his name at Mr. Walpole's door, though he passed it continually in his morning walks. *Hare* himself, who was one of his most favoured associates, vainly exerted every effort to make him say a few civil words to a lady of quality; the late Mrs. Hobart, afterwards Albinia, Countess of Buckinghamshire; by whom he was seated at supper in a great public company, met at Mrs. Crewe's expressly to celebrate the success of his election: a success, to which that lady, as he knew, had contributed by every means in her power; and who, as her reward, only aspired to attract his notice or attention for a few minutes. He turned his back on her, and would not utter a syllable. Hurt at Fox's neglect, *Hare*, who sat nearly opposite to him, and who was accustomed to treat him with the utmost freedom; took out a pencil, wrote three lines, and pushed the paper across the table to his friend. The lines I shall not transcribe, as they were too energetic, or rather, coarse, to allow of their insertion: but, they adjured Fox (in language as strong as Mæcenas used to Augustus, when he wrote to the emperor, "*Siste tandem, Carnifex!*") to turn himself round towards the lady in question. He calmly perused the billet, and then, having torn it in small pieces, which he placed on the table; without appearing to pay any attention to *Hare*, he turned his back, if possible, still more decidedly on the person, in whose behalf the expostulation was written. These facts were related to me by a nobleman, a friend of Fox, who was present on the occasion.

If ever an individual existed in this country, who, from his natural bias, would have inclined to maintain in their fullest extent, all the just prerogatives of the crown; and who would have restrained within due limits, every attempt on the part of the people, to diminish its constitutional influence; we may assert that Fox was the man. The principles of his early education; the example and exhortations of his father, for whom he always preserved an affectionate reverence, which constituted a most pleasing feature of his character; his first political connexions; — all led him to the foot of the throne. He had tasted the comforts

of office under Lord North, and his very wants rendered indispensable to him a return to power. Nor, whatever moral disapprobation his private irregularities unquestionably excited in the breast of a sovereign, whose whole life was exempt from any breach of decency or decorum; could those defects of conduct have formed any insurmountable impediment to his attainment of the highest employments. In point of fact, neither the Duke of Grafton, whom "Junius" stigmatizes as "a libertine by profession;" nor the Earls of Rochford and Sandwich, nor Lord Weymouth, nor Lord Barrington, nor Lord Thurlow, had been distinguished by sanctity of manners, though they had all occupied the first situations in the state. Sir Francis Dashwood, who afterwards became premier Baron of England, under the title of Lord Le Despenser; and whom Lord Bute made chancellor of the exchequer in 1762, for his skill, as Wilkes asserts, in casting up tavern bills; far exceeded in licentiousness of conduct, any model exhibited since Charles the Second. He had founded a club or society, towards the end of George the Second's reign, denominated from his own name, "the Franciscans, who, to the number of twelve, met at Medmenham Abbey, near Marlow in Bucks, on the banks of the Thames. Wilkes was a member of this unholy fraternity, of which he makes mention in his letter to Earl Temple, written from Bagshot, in September, 1762. Rites, of a nature so subversive of all decency, and calculated, by an imitation of the ceremonies and mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church, to render religion itself an object of contumely, were there celebrated, as cannot be reflected on without astonishment and reprobation. Sir Francis himself sometimes officiated as high priest, habited in the dress of a Franciscan monk; engaged in pouring a libation from a communion-cup, to the mysterious object of their homage. Churchill, in his poem of "The Candidate," has drawn him under this character at Medmenham: but I cannot prevail on myself to cite the passage. Immorality or even profligacy, abstractedly considered, formed therefore, it is evident, no insurmountable bar to employment under George the Third.

Fox's error arose, if not wholly, yet principally, from a different source. In the ardour of political opposition, stimulated perhaps by domestic wants of many kinds, finding himself so long excluded from office, and conscious that he was become personally obnoxious to the sovereign, not so much from his irregularities, as by embracing the cause and the defence of the king's revolted subjects beyond the Atlantic; Fox did not always confine himself within a constitutional and temperate resistance to the measures of the crown. Mingling the spirit of faction with the principles of party; while he appeared only to attack the minister, he levelled many of his severest insinuations or accusations at the king. He consequently obstructed the attainment of the object, which lay within his grasp. As the American war drew towards its termination, he observed scarcely any measure in the condemnation which he expressed for the authors of the contest.

When the new parliament met on the first day of November, 1780, and it was proposed in the address to the throne, that the House of Commons should acknowledge, "the sole objects of the king's royal care and concern, were to promote the happiness of his people;" words merely complimentary; Fox rising in his place, exclaimed, — "We are called on to recognize the blessings of his majesty's reign. I cannot concur in such a vote, for I am not acquainted with those blessings. The present reign offers one uninterrupted series of disgrace, misfortune, and calamity!" Only a few weeks afterwards, in January, 1781, when the debate on the Dutch war took place, — "The reign of Charles the Second," observed Mr. Fox, who twice engaged in hostilities with Holland, has been denominated an infamous reign: but the evils inflicted on this country by the *Stuarts*, were happily retrieved by a revolution: while the ills of the present reign admit of no redress." He even proceeded to draw a sort of parallel, or rather contrast, of the most invidious description, between Catherine the Second, and George the Third; two sovereigns who, having ascended the thrones of Russia and of Great Britain, nearly about the same

time, had exhibited an opposite line of conduct: the former empire rising under Catherine, into eminence; while England, governed by George, sunk into contempt. I recollect that towards the close of the same session of parliament, in June, 1781, during the progress of a debate which arose relative to the payment into the exchequer, of the balances in the hands of public accountants; Fox, who was well aware of the obloquy under which his father, Lord Holland's memory lay, as "the defaulter of unaccounted millions," entered largely and warmly into his defence. The evil, he said, resulted from that most unfortunate circumstance of his father's life, his ever having been connected with administration in the commencement of the *present reign*. "Such," continued Fox, "has uniformly been the impenetrable mystery, and the intricacy of government, throughout this unfortunate reign: such has been the dark, perplexed, and ambiguous system pursued by ministers, that no person who contemplates it, can pervade the obscurity, or pierce the clouds that invest their measures. It is become impossible to distinguish the *real*, from the *ostensible* minister. Hence the guilty author of nefarious or ruinous measures, escapes without censure, while the detestation and the disgrace fall upon the innocent." The house was at no loss to guess at whom these reflections were pointed.

In November, 1779, he far exceeded in severity of language even the foregoing remarks, when he did not hesitate to compare Henry the Sixth with his present majesty; and to assimilate their characters, qualities, and the disgraces of their respective reigns, as affording the most complete resemblance. "Both," he observed, "owed the crown to revolutions: both were pious princes, and both lost the acquisitions of their predecessor." The speeches of Fox, it must be owned, breathed a very revolutionary spirit, throughout the whole progress of the American war. Smarting under such reflections, the king began to consider the principles and the doctrines of Fox, as inseparably implicated with rebellion. From that instant, the splendour of his talents only enhanced the magnitude of his offence. His uncle, the Duke of

Richmond, who seemed to emulate the same distinction, and who indulged himself in remarks equally severe, on the supposed interference of the crown in perpetuating the struggle, might find pardon in the mediocrity of his abilities. But, Fox's fault necessarily inspired deeper feelings of resentment, and may be said to have eminently contributed to the misfortunes of his political life.

Amidst the wildest excesses of youth, even while he was the perpetual victim of his passion for play, his elegant mind eagerly cultivated at intervals, a taste for letters. His education had made him early acquainted with the writers of Greece and Rome, historical, as well as philosophical and poetical. The beautiful passages of Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Cicero, which were familiar to him, seemed always to present themselves to his memory without an effort. When speaking in parliament, he knew how to avail himself of their assistance, or to convert them to his purpose, with a promptitude and facility that it is difficult to imagine. Burke himself was not his superior on this point. So well had he been grounded in classic knowledge, that he could read the Greek, no less than the Roman historians, as well as poets, in the original; and however extraordinary the fact may appear, he found resources in the perusal of their works, under the most severe depressions occasioned by ill success at the gaming-table. Topham Beauclerk, whom I have already had occasion to mention, and who always maintained habits of great intimacy with Fox; quitted him one morning, at six o'clock, after having passed the whole preceding night together at faro. Fortune had been most unfavourable to Fox, whom his friend left in a frame of mind approaching to desperation. Beauclerk's anxiety respecting the consequences which might ensue from such a state of agitation, impelled him to be early at Fox's lodgings; and on arriving, he enquired, not without apprehension, whether he was risen. The servant replying that Mr. Fox was in the drawing-room, he walked up stairs; and cautiously opening the door, where he expected to behold a frantic gamester, stretched on the floor, bewailing his misfortunes,

or plunged in silent despair; to his equal astonishment and satisfaction, Beauclerk discovered him intently engaged in reading a Greek Herodotus. "What would you have me do," said he, "I have lost my last shilling! Such was the elasticity, suavity, and equality of disposition that characterized him; and with so little effort did he pass from profligate dissipation, to researches of taste or literature. After staking and losing all that he could raise, at faro; instead of exclaiming against fortune, or manifesting the agitation natural under such circumstances, he has been known to lay his head on the table; and retaining his place, but, extenuated by fatigue of mind and body, almost immediately to fall into a profound sleep.

Mr. Fox was not only conversant with the works of antiquity; modern history, polite letters, and poetry, were equally familiar to him. Few individuals were better instructed in the annals of their own country. Having travelled when young, over France and Italy, he had studied the finest productions of those countries, so fertile in works of genius, at the fountain-head. Davila and Guicciardini, he read in the original. Danté, Ariosto, and Tasso, constituted the frequent companions of his leisure hours, whom he perused with delight; and the striking parts of which authors, as he proceeded, he constantly marked with his own hand. For the "Orlando Furioso," one of the most eccentric, but, wonderful productions of human genius, I know that he expressed great partiality; preferring it to the "Gierusalemme Liberata." Nor was he devoid, himself, of some portion of poetic talents, as many compositions of his pen which remain, sufficiently attest; though for ease, delicacy, and playful satire, he could not stand a competition in that branch of accomplishment, with his friend and companion Colonel Fitzpatrick. The verses, or Epigram, written on Gibbon's accepting the employment of a lord of trade, in 1779, beginning,

"King George in a flight,
Lest Gibbon should write
The History of England's disgrace;
Thought no way so sure
His pen to secure,
As to give the historian a place;"

I have always understood to be from Fox's pen, though it is disowned by Lord Holland, as "certainly not his uncle's composition." I know, however, that some years afterwards, when his effects in St. James's street were seized for debt, and his books were sold; a set of Gibbon's "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*," in the first leaf of which work, Fox had with his own hand inserted the stanzas in question; produced a very considerable sum, under the belief or conviction that he was their author.

Fox conversed in French, nearly with the same purity and facility, as he did in English; writing in that language not less correctly, nor with less elegance. A man of his high birth and connexions, possessing qualifications so rare, independent of his parliamentary abilities, seemed to be pointed out by nature, for the superintendence of the foreign department of state. Those persons who anticipated the fall of Lord North's administration, already imagined that they beheld Mr. Fox in that situation, for which talents and education had evidently designed him. Yet, after contemplating the portrait which I have here sketched, and which, I imagine, even his greatest admirers, if they are candid, will admit to do him no injustice; it is for impartial posterity to determine, whether on full examination of his merits and defects, George the Third may be considered as most deserving of approbation or of blame, in never having at any period of his reign voluntarily called Mr. Fox to his counsels. If energy of mind, enlargement of views, firmness of character, amenity of manners, acquaintance with foreign courts and languages, facility in conducting business, and prodigious intellectual powers, combining eloquence, application, as well as discernment; — if these endowments are considered as forming an incontestable claim to public employment, unsustained by correct moral deportment, or by property; we must condemn the sentence of exclusion passed upon him. Those persons on the other hand, who consider all talent, however eminent, as radically defective, unless sustained by decorum, and a regard for opinion; — as well as all who prefer sobriety of con-

duct, regularity of manners, and the virtues of private life, above any ability, which nature can bestow on man; — lastly, all who regard judgment, under the controul of strict principle, as the most indispensable requisite of a minister, to whom the public honour and felicity are in some measure necessarily entrusted; — such persons will probably hesitate before they decide too hastily, on the degree of censure or of commendation, which the king's conduct towards Fox, ought to excite in our minds.

If Fox occupied the first place in the ranks of opposition, Burke might be pronounced without contest, the second person in that powerful body. His extraordinary endowments of mind, superseded every defect of birth, fortune, connexions or country; and placed him on an eminence, to which no subject in my time, unassisted by those advantages, with the single exception of Mr. Sheridan, has ever attained in the public estimation. For, it may perhaps be justly questioned, whether the splendid talents of the first Mr. Pitt, would have forced his way into the cabinet, unaided and unsustained by his alliance with the family of Grenville, though his own paternal descent was most honourable. Of years much more advanced than Fox, Burke had already attained to the acme of his fame as an orator, and could not well augment the reputation which he had acquired in that capacity. Perhaps, if we were to point out the period of his life, when he stood on the highest ground as a public man, in the estimation of all parties, we should name the year 1781. His recent exertions in bringing forward the bill for the reform of the civil list, which had engaged such general attention in the last session of the preceding parliament, continued still fresh in recollection. Whatever opinion might be entertained respecting the necessity, or the eligibility, of those proposed regulations in the royal household; only one sentiment pervaded the house and the nation, on the unexampled combination of eloquence, labour, and perseverance, which had been displayed by their enlightened author. They covered with astonishment and admiration, even those who

from principle or from party, appeared most strenuous in opposing the progress of the bill itself, through every stage. The very rejection which had attended many clauses of it, and the address with which others were finally evaded or eluded, had conduced to raise him in the national opinion.

While, however, I do this justice to his talents and intentions, it is impossible not to consider with very different feelings, the splendid eulogium which he made on that occasion, of which *Necker* formed the subject. Burke, in sublime and animated language, described the system of public credit adopted by Louis the Sixteenth, under the guidance of his Genevese financial minister; which he depicted as the consummation of human ability, economy, and judicious calculation. Neither Sully, nor Colbert, he said, could compete with Necker: while the sovereign of France, unlike his predecessors on the throne, who had recourse when in distress, to the bold frauds or plunges of bankrupt despotism, for raising pecuniary supplies; built all his plans on the firm basis of national confidence, sustained by pecuniary regulations, calculated to pay the interest of the debt thus incurred. Such were the arts and assertions, by which George the Third, Lord North, and the American war, became objects of reprobation! If Burke really believed the facts that he laid down, what are we to think of his judgment! But there is a holy mistaken zeal in politics, as in religion, of which delusive cup he had drank deep. The intoxication insensibly dispersed after 1789; and before 1792, he beheld Louis the Sixteenth, Necker, and their insensate, or pernicious measures, through a just medium. He then endeavoured to counteract the effect of his own orations. In 1781, the delusion subsisted in all its force. The unqualified condemnation which he had always bestowed on the American war, from the period of its commencement, seemed to be at least justified by the result of the contest; and in that sentiment he was then supported by a majority of the British people. When to the operation of these combined causes, we add the acknowledged mediocrity of his fortune, which left him in a sort of dependance

on the Marquis of Rockingham; together with his long exclusion from office, and his unimpeached moral character, contrasted with the irregularity of Fox's conduct; we shall not wonder at the high place which he occupied, within, no less than without, the walls of the House of Commons.

All those persons to whom his memory is dear, may like to contemplate him at this point of time, when he appears most resplendent, as well as free from many of the weaknesses, inconsistencies, and infirmities, to which our nature is subject, and from which he was by no means exempt. His admirers will recollect with concern, the querulous lamentations, and unseemly reluctance, with which, in 1782 and 1783, he each time quitted the pay office, on the change of administration. They will remember the acts of imprudence and indiscretion, not to call them by any harsher name, which characterized his tenure of office, during the existence of the coalition ministry; to defend, or to palliate which, demanded the utmost efforts of Fox's parliamentary abilities. They will probably admit and lament, his too ardent prosecution of Hastings, for asserted political errors or trespasses, which, even though they had existed in their utmost extent, ought to have found their apology in the difficulties of his situation; beset, as he was, with domestic and foreign enemies, in charge of a vast empire, and necessitated to find resources on the spot, against internal commotions, no less than against external hostility. They will reprobate with severity his intemperate and indecorous conduct, as a member of parliament, in 1788, on an occasion when the country at large felt the deepest sympathy and distress for the intellectual illness of the sovereign. And finally, though they will exult in the meritorious line of action which he embraced on the commencement of the French revolution, as equally honourable to himself and beneficial to the cause of order and government throughout the civilized world; yet they cannot forget that he received from Mr. Pitt soon afterwards, two pensions for three lives, of eighteen hundred pounds a year, each, as his reward: and they will perhaps incline to admit, that

on an impartial survey, Mr. Burke appears greater and more elevated in 1781, than at any subsequent period of his political life.

He was then more than fifty years of age, of which he had passed fifteen in the House of Commons. I believe he owed his first seat in that assembly, not to the Marquis of Rockingham, but to the late Earl Verney, with whom he had formed some connections of a pecuniary nature; during the continuance of which, both that nobleman and Mr. Burke became purchasers, to a considerable amount, of East India stock. The latter, as it was asserted, sold out in time, after clearing so large a sum by the transaction, as with it to have purchased the estate or house at Gregories, near Beaconsfield in Bucks, where he always resided when not in London. Lord Verney, less fortunate, or less prudent, though possessed of a vast landed property, was almost ruined by his East India purchases; and Richard Burke, Edmund's brother, who was then a practitioner at the bar, being likewise involved in the same losing concern, was said to be unable to fulfil his stock engagements; or, in the language of Change Alley, to have *waddled*. Hence, in allusion to this circumstance, his enemies, instead of *Dick* Burke, commonly called him *Duck* Burke. Edmund, in 1781, rented a house in the broad sanctuary, Westminster, conveniently situated for his attendance in parliament; but, entertained very little company; and his pecuniary obligations to the Marquis of Rockingham, which were known to be great, sufficiently indicated the limited nature of his private fortune.

Nature had bestowed on him a boundless imagination, aided by a memory of equal strength and tenacity. His fancy was so vivid, that it seemed to light up by its own powers, and to burn without consuming the aliment on which it fed: sometimes bearing him away into ideal scenes created by his own exuberant mind, but from which he, sooner or later, returned to the subject of debate; descending from his most aerial flights by a gentle and imperceptible gradation, till he again touched the ground. Learning waited on him like a hand-

maid, presenting to his choice, all that antiquity has culled or invented, most elucidatory of the topic under discussion. He always seemed to be oppressed under the load and variety of his intellectual treasures; of which he frequently scattered portions with a lavish hand, to inattentive, impatient, ignorant, hungry, and sleepy hearers, undeserving of such presents. Nor did he resist, though warned by the clamorous vociferation of the house, to restrain or to abbreviate his speeches. Every power of oratory was wielded by him in turn: for, he could be during the same evening, often within the space of a few minutes, pathetic and humorous; acrimonious and conciliating; now giving a loose to his indignation or severity; and then, almost in the same breath, calling to his assistance, wit and ridicule. It would be endless to cite instances of this versatility of disposition, and of the rapidity of his transitions,

“From grave to gay, from lively to severe,”

that I have, myself, witnessed. I will only mention one, as a proof of his wit, which occurred in the session of 1781, not many months after I first came into parliament. The secretary at war (Jenkinson), having laid on the table of the house, an account of the extraordinaries of the army, where the sums remitted to America during the preceding year exceeded two millions seven hundred thousand pounds; Mr. Harley, through whose hands the greater part of the money had passed, rose in order to give some account of its application. For that purpose, the alderman, who was no orator, and who very rarely obtruded himself on the speaker's attention; read from a paper which he held in his hand, a few gross sums or items, which constituted the greater part of the enormous expenditure under examination. His recital scarcely took up five minutes. Burke instantly rising, exclaimed, “This account is, I believe, the most laconic that ever was given of so great a sum of money, expended in the public service. Considering the magnitude of the sums that the right honorable gentleman has swallowed, he really merits admiration for the promptitude with which he has

either digested, or disgorged them. His charge and his discharge are equally expeditious. He is a species of canal, through which the profusion of the government passes. I imagine, however, it does not flow off altogether without contributing something to his nourishment. No doubt such remittances, like the mud of the Nile, have in them a fattening quality; or, to use a vulgar phrase, they stick to the ribs. Oh! how I long for an inspection of this *Harleian Miscellany!*" Alderman Harley, the subject of these metaphors, listened to them with great composure, and did not attempt to make any reply: but no ordinary muscles could resist their effect. I remember on another occasion, where Burke had covered Lord North with ridicule (I think it was upon the report made by the commissioners of accounts in 1781), that nobleman answered all his arguments at considerable length. "And now, Mr. Speaker," said he, "I believe I have replied to every thing which has fallen from the honourable gentleman, except his wit. That, I readily acknowledge, is unanswerable, he being greatly my superior in that respect." Notwithstanding indeed the acrimonious personal virulence with which Burke frequently treated Lord North, no man in the House of Commons appeared to enjoy his sallies of wit, more than the first minister. He laughed immoderately, when Burke compared the sympathy or mutual dependence of administration and the American war, to the Porter's breech and Taliacotius's nose in "*Hudibras*." "They will both," said he, "expire together:

"When life of parent nock is out,
Off drops the sympathetic snout."

"So, with the termination of the present war, will their places be extinguished." Yet, with such an assemblage of endowments, which would have sufficed to form many orators; though Burke instructed, delighted, and astonished, he frequently fatigued, because his faculties were not controlled by a severe judgment.

In his dress and exterior, he was not less negligent than Fox: but, the spirit of party did not blend with the colour of

his apparel; and he rarely or never came to the house in blue and buff, though I heard him eulogise Laurens, the American ex-president when a prisoner in the tower, in terms such as *Pope* uses when speaking of *Atterbury*, under the same circumstances. On that occasion he did not scruple to produce, and to read as part of his speech, a letter addressed to him by Dr. Franklin, from Paris, in answer to his own application on the subject of effecting or facilitating General Burgoyne's release, by his exchange against Laurens. I have always considered Burke's conduct, in thus opening a correspondence with the representative of a revolted body of men, who was then residing at the court of France, with which nation we were at open war; as one of the greatest insults on the government, on parliament, on the laws, and on the majesty of the sovereign, which has been committed in our time, by any subject, with impunity. It was only exceeded by Fox's sending a delegate from himself, as head of the opposition, to Petersburg, in 1791; an act for which, it seemed to me, he might justly have been impeached. But, Hastings and Lord Melville were both sent to take their trial at the bar of the peers, under the present reign, while Fox and Burke escaped all prosecution. When the latter ventured to boast in the House of Commons, of his intercourse with Franklin, he relied on the passive endurance of an unpopular cabinet, divided among themselves, and sinking under the contest with a combination of European powers leagued against us for the emancipation of America. There were not wanting, however, individuals, even at that moment of British humiliation and embarrassment, who rose and expressed their indignation of Burke's temerity. "Good God!" exclaimed Lord Newhaven, "do not my senses deceive me! can a member of this assembly, not only avow his correspondence with a rebel, but dare to read it to us!" — George Onslow, member for Guildford, seemed disposed to adopt measures of censure against Burke; but, the speaker interposing, stopt him as disorderly, there being no motion before the house. Neither Lord North, nor Lord George Germain, who were both present, and spoke

on the question, alluded to Burke's correspondence; and he treated Lord Newhaven's animadversions with contemptuous levity. Burke constantly wore spectacles. His enunciation was vehement, rapid, and never checked by any embarrassment: for his ideas outran his powers of utterance, and he drew from an exhaustless source. But, his Irish accent, which was as strong as if he had never quitted the banks of the Shannon, diminished to the ear, the enchanting effect of his eloquence on the mind. Dundas, who laboured under a similar impediment, yet turned it to account, if I may so express myself; some of his expressions or allusions, by the variation in pronouncing a single letter, or pressing too hard upon a vowel, frequently producing such an equivocal sound, conveying at the same time so strange an impression on the ears of his audience, as put to flight all gravity, and convulsed the house with laughter. In brilliancy of wit, Lord North alone could compete with Burke; for Sheridan had not then appeared. Burke extracted all his images from classic authorities: a fact, of which among a hundred others, he displayed a beautiful exemplification, when he said of Wilkes, borne along in triumph by the mob, that he resembled Pindar, elevated on the wings of poetical inspiration,

—“Numerisque fertur
Lege solutis:”

a pun of admirable delicacy, and the closest application.

His personal qualities of temper and disposition (such as the infirmity of our nature), by no means corresponded with his intellectual endowments. Throughout his general manner and deportment in parliament, there was a mixture of petulancy, impatience, and at times of intractability, which greatly obscured the lustre of his talents. His very features, and the undulating motions of his head, while under the influence of anger or passion, were eloquently expressive of this irritability, which on some occasions seemed to approach towards alienation of mind. Even his friends could not always induce him to listen to reason and remonstrance, though they

sometimes held him down in his seat, by the skirts of his coat, in order to prevent the ebullitions of his violence or indignation. Gentle, mild, and amenable to argument in private society, of which he formed the delight and the ornament, he was often intemperate and reprehensibly personal in parliament. Fox, however irritated, never forgot that he was a chief. Burke, in his most sublime flights, was only a partizan. The countenance of the latter, full of intellect, but destitute of softness, and which rarely relaxed into a smile, did not invite approach or conciliation. His enmities and prejudices, though they originated in principle, as well as in conviction, yet became tinged with the virulent spirit of party; and were eventually in many instances, inveterate, unjust, and insurmountable. Infinitely more respectable than Fox, he was, nevertheless, far less amiable. Exempt from his defects and irregularities, Burke wanted the suavity of Fox's manner, his amenity, and his placability. The one procured more admirers. The other possessed more friends. Though acting together to a common point, as members of the House of Commons, and embarked in the same cause, their intimacy seemed always to commence, and to cease, at the entrance of the lobby. Burke retired from the discharge of his parliamentary functions, exhausted, chagrined, and often irritated; to repair immediately to his family, or to the duties and avocations of domestic life. Fox, always fresh, and never more alert than after a long debate, only quitted the house, in order to drive to Brookes's. Even in their nearest approximations, there were always essential and striking distinctions between the two opposition leaders. In genius, in learning, in eloquence, in politics, they were assimilated. But in their occupations, amusements, society, companions, and modes of life, never were two men more discordant. They continued, nevertheless, to act together through succeeding parliaments, in good and in adverse fortune, until the French revolution finally dis severed them. The obvious defect of Burke was want of temper and self-command. Fox's latent blemish lay in his dissolute habits and ruined fortune, which enabled his ene-

mies to compare him with Catiline. Both wanted judgment to perceive, that even under the free constitution of Great Britain, the cabinet, though it may be taken by storm, cannot be long held except by favour. Mr. Fox, in 1806, when unfortunately at the end of his career, appears to have thoroughly come up with this great truth, of which, in 1781, he was either regardless or ignorant.

In surveying the opposition side of the House of Commons at this period, the idea of Barré naturally and unavoidably suggests itself after that of Burke. Both were natives of the same country, Ireland; and both had attained to vast celebrity in their adopted country, England. But no sort of comparison could be made between their talents, acquirements, or claim to general admiration; in all of which Burke possessed an infinite superiority. Of an athletic frame and mould, endowed with extraordinary powers of voice, Barré, as a speaker, roughly enforced, rather than solicited or attracted attention. Severe, and sometimes coarse in his censures or accusations, he nevertheless always sustained his charges against ministers, however strong, with considerable force of argument and language. He, too, as well as Burke, lavished his encomiums on the banker of Copet, the financier of France; whose example for enlightened economy, and impartial pecuniary retribution, Barré recommended to Lord North's imitation. But he was more measured in his panegyrics than Burke, and did not elevate Necker above Sully and Colbert. Slow, measured, and dictatorial in his manner of enunciation, he was not carried away by those beautiful digressions of genius or fancy, with which Burke captivated and entertained his audience. Master, nevertheless, of his subject, and more attentive than Burke, not to fatigue the patience of the house when he saw them eager to rise, he frequently obtained a more indulgent hearing. Deprived already of one eye, and menaced with a privation of both; advanced in years, grey-headed, and of a savage aspect, he reminded the beholders when he rose, of Belisarius, rather than of Tully. Yet possessing a cultivated understanding, conversant with the

works of antiquity, and able on occasion to press them into his service, he sometimes displayed a great diversity of information.

Near him, on the same bench, in the front ranks of the minority, usually sat his friend and colleague, Dunning. Never perhaps did nature enclose a more illuminated mind, in a body of meaner and more abject appearance. It is difficult to do justice to the peculiar species of ugliness which characterised his person and figure, although he did not labour under any absolute deformity of shape or limb. A degree of infirmity, and almost of debility or decay in his organs, augmented the effect of his other bodily misfortunes. Even his voice was so husky and choked with phlegm, that it refused utterance to the sentiments which were dictated by his superior intelligence. In consequence of this physical impediment, he lay always under a necessity of involuntary announcing his intention to address the house, some time before he actually rose, by the repeated attempts which he made to clear his throat. But all these imperfections and defects of configuration, were obliterated by the ability which he displayed. In spite of the monotony of his tones, and his total want of animation, as well as grace; yet so powerful was reason when flowing from his lips, that every murmur became hushed, and every ear attentive. It seemed, nevertheless, the acute sophistry of a lawyer, rather than the speech of a man of the world, or the eloquence of a man of letters and education. Every sentence, though admirable in itself, yet resembled more the pleading of the bar, than the oratory of the senate. So difficult is it for the most expanded or enlightened intellect, to throw off the habits of a profession. Dunning rather subdued his hearers, by his powers of argumentative ratiocination, which have rarely been exceeded, than he could be said to delight his audience. His legal talents soon afterwards raised him to the peerage; just in time to attain that elevation, as his constitution speedily sunk under accumulated disorders, which hurried him prematurely to the grave. This extraordinary man, who was not exempt from great infirmity of

mind, felt, or perceived so little his corporeal deficiencies, as to consider his person with extraordinary predilection. Fond of viewing his face in the glass, he passed no time more to his satisfaction, than in decorating himself for his appearance in the world. He and Barré, who were fellow-labourers in the same vineyard, represented likewise the same borough, Calne; and belonged, or at least looked up to the same political chief, Lord Shelburne. They consequently were animated by no common principle of union, or of action, with Fox and Burke, except one; that of overturning the administration. On all other points, a secret jealousy and rivalry subsisted between the adherents of the Shelburne and the Rockingham parties.

Admiral Keppel might likewise be accounted among the principal members of opposition in the House of Commons at this period; though his oratorical talents seemed to be no more conspicuously exerted in debate, than his nautical skill as a commander, had been displayed on the quarter-deck, during the memorable action of the 27th of July, 1778. But, the persecution, which, as it was pretended, he had undergone, for his conduct on that day; the accusation brought against him by Palliser, and the ministerial, as well as royal enmity, which he had incurred; — these political merits, when added to his connection with the Duke of Bedford, whom the opposition had already marked as their own, though he was not quite sixteen years of age at this time: elevated him to a consideration, which he could otherwise never have attained. Excluded from representing the borough of Windsor, at the recent general election in 1780; the popular effervescence of the moment, inflamed at his rejection, where it was supposed that the influence and personal exertions of the sovereign among the tradesmen of the town, had considerably operated to his prejudice, brought him in for Surrey: a county in which he possessed no property, nor any hereditary interest. There appeared neither dignity in his person, nor intelligence in his countenance, the features of which were of the most ordinary cast: and his nose,

which, in consequence of an accident that befel him in the course of his professional life, had been almost laid flat, gave him an equally vulgar and unpleasant air. His abilities were indeed of a very limited description, altogether unfit for such a theatre as parliament: but, the minority having already destined him to succeed, and to supplant, Lord Sandwich, as soon as they could gain possession of power, it became indispensable to sustain him on every occasion, with all their efforts.

Another distinguished naval commander, Lord Howe, who then filled a seat in the house, might likewise be numbered among the determined opponents of government. Since his return from America, he had not enjoyed the smiles of the court; but his professional character supported him with the public. His steady, cool, and phlegmatic courage, sustained by great nautical experience and skill; when added to the wholesome severity of his discipline while on service, deservedly placed him high in the estimation of all parties. Among the sailors he was known, from his dark complexion, by the epithet of "Black Dick." If no genius could be discovered in the lines of his face, there was in them an expression of serene and passive fortitude which could not be mistaken. His profile bore, indeed, a very strong resemblance to the portraits of George the First, from whom, by his mother, he descended. She was the natural daughter of that prince, by his mistress, Madame de Platen, whom he created Countess of Darlington, some years after his accession to the crown of Great Britain. In parliament, as an orator, Lord Howe made, if possible, a worse figure than Keppel; who, when he addressed the house, was at least intelligible, though he might not greatly illuminate the subject. Lord Howe's ideas were commonly either so ill conceived by himself, or so darkly and ambiguously expressed, that it was by no means easy to comprehend his precise meaning. This oracular and confused mode of delivery, rendered still more obscure by the part of the house where he usually sat, which was on a back row, at a distance from the speaker's chair, increased, however,

the effect of his oratory ; and seemed to exemplify Burke's assertion, that "Obscurity is a source of the sublime."

Sir George Savile, who represented the county of York, attracted, from his descent and alliances, great consideration. His known integrity and disinterestedness, joined to his extensive landed property, elevated him in the public opinion, more than any endowments of intellect, or parliamentary ability. He possessed, nevertheless, plain manly sense, and a facility of utterance, which, even independent of his high character and ample fortune, always secured him attention.

Lord John Cavendish was listened to, whenever he rose, with similar deference or predilection ; nor was he altogether destitute of some pretension to eloquence. His near alliance to the Duke of Devonshire, the head of the *whig* Interest, his very *name*, connected with the revolution of 1688, which secured the liberties of Great Britain ; his unblemished reputation, and his talents, though in themselves very moderate ; — all these qualities combined to impress with esteem, even those who differed most from him in political opinion. Homely in his figure, of manners, simple, unassuming, and destitute of all elegance or dignity ; he presented the appearance of a yeoman or a mechanic, rather than of a man of high quality. Nature had in the most legible characters, stamped honesty on the features of his countenance ; but she had not accompanied it with any ornamental present. The opposition already considered him as chancellor of the exchequer in embryo.

General Conway, brother to the Earl of Hertford, though by no means a man of eminent capacity, or a superior speaker, yet surpassed in these respects either of the two last-mentioned individuals. His military experience, acquired in Germany during the "Seven Years War ;" his birth and illustrious descent, together with the recollection of his having already occupied one of the most eminent employments of state under a former administration ; as he filled the post of secretary for the home department, during the short period of ten months when Lord Rockingham presided

at the treasury in 1765 and the following year ; — so many pretensions, authorized him to expect a situation no less conspicuous, in any future ministerial arrangement. Though he had already passed his sixtieth year, yet his figure and deportment were exceedingly distinguished, nor did he want abilities ; but his enunciation, embarrassed, and often involved, generally did injustice to his conceptions.

Mr. Thomas Townsend, commonly denominated "Tommy Townsend," and commemorated under that name, in Goldsmith's celebrated poem of "Retaliation," where he describes Burke,

"Tho' fraught with all learning, yet straining
his throat,
To induce Tommy Townsend to lend him a
vote ;"

look confidently forward, no less than General Conway, to a high place in some future ministry, when Lord North should be driven from power. Nor were his expectations eventually disappointed. Having held the lucrative post of joint paymaster of the forces, at an early period of his majesty's reign, during about six months, he was already a member of the privy council. He possessed likewise a very independent fortune, and considerable parliamentary interest, present, as well as prospective ; two circumstances which greatly contributed to his personal, no less than to his political elevation : — for, his abilities, though respectable, scarcely rose above mediocrity. Yet, as he always spoke with facility, sometimes with energy, and was never embarrassed by any degree of timidity, he maintained a conspicuous place in the front ranks of opposition.

General Burgoyne would not deserve any mention in this list, if respect were had only to his parliamentary talents : but, his sufferings in the cause of opposition, which elevated him to the rank of a martyr, like Keppel ; Fox's attachment towards him, and his connexion by marriage with Lord Derby, one of the minority chiefs ; — these merits supplied every deficiency. In his person he rose above the common height, and when young, must have possessed a distinguished figure : but, years had enfeebled him, though he was cast in an athletic

mould. His military services in the field had never been resplendent. He seemed more fitted for the drawing-room, than for the camp; for pleasing in society, than for commanding armies. No man possessed more polished manners. His manifestos were more admired for their composition, while he was at the head of the British forces in America, than his tactics or his manœuvres. Of his dramatic talents, the comedy of the "Heiress" forms an eminent proof; and I believe, he contributed his aid to the celebrated "Probationary Odes."

It was difficult to contemplate him, without recollecting the disgraceful colours under which "Junius" has designated him, as taking his stand at a gaming-table, and watching with the soberest attention, for a fair opportunity of engaging a drunken young nobleman at picquet;" as "drawing a regular and splendid subsistence from play;" and as "sitting down for the remainder of his life, *infamous and contented*, with the money received from the Duke of Grafton, for the sale of a patent place in the customs." These aspersions, which never received any public answer, did not prevent his occupying a distinguished place in Fox's regard; who exhibited a strong proof of it, by becoming Burgoyne's nominee on the committee appointed to try the contested election for the borough of Preston, which he represented in the spring of 1781. Supported by such ability, the general kept his seat. I have been assured that when he returned on his parole from America, in May, 1778; the opposition, apprehensive of his taking part with administration, and fearful that he might accuse the adherents of Congress in this country, with having contributed by their language in parliament, if not by other modes of encouragement, to the resistance that produced the disaster of Saratoga; determined if possible to gain him. For that purpose Fox went down privately to Hounslow in a hired post chaise, where he met Burgoyne soon after he had landed, on his way from Plymouth to London. In the course of a long and confidential interview, Fox convinced him so thoroughly, that the ministers would not support him; that Lord George Germain must accuse him, in

order to exculpate himself; that the king had imbibed very strong prejudices against him, and that the administration could not last a twelvemonth; as to induce the general to transfer his charges of misconduct, from the opposition, to the treasury bench. Present protection, and future employment, whenever they should attain to power, followed of course. I have no doubt of the accuracy of this fact, as I received it from high living authority.

Burgoyne always affected to consider the whole administration, as leagued against him, in order to retard or to impede his exchange. Towards Lord George Germain, who presided over the American department, he of course felt, and frequently expressed, great personal alienation, or rather asperity. I remember hearing him declare in his place, as a member of parliament, towards the close of Lord North's ministry, in December, 1781, that he would rather submit to be recalled to America by Congress, and be committed to a dungeon, there to perish, than condescend to solicit a favour from men who had oppressed him in a manner the most severe; who had refused him a court martial; who had calumniated his private character, and had treated him with every sort of indignity. How far these charges were founded in truth or justice, I cannot venture to say; but it appeared, both on Lord George Germain's and on Lord North's testimony, that endeavours had been made by our government to obtain his exchange from Congress, which were only frustrated by an evasion on the part of the American executive power, in not ratifying a capitulation, where a number of their troops had fallen into our hands. Burgoyne himself admitted the justice of our claim over those captured soldiers; who had been proffered to Congress as an equivalent for him: but he maintained, that when they were rejected, other prisoners should have been tendered in their place. *Regulus* was not, however, the character among the unfortunate commanders of antiquity, whom he had proposed for his own model.

Wilkes could not properly be considered as a member of the minority; because, though he always sat on that side of the house, and usually voted

with them, yet he neither depended on Lord Rockingham, nor on Lord Shelburne: but his predilections leaned towards the latter nobleman. Representing, as he did, the county of Middlesex, he spoke from a great parliamentary eminence. He was an incomparable comedian in all he said or did; and he seemed to consider human life itself as a mere comedy. In the House of Commons he was not less an actor than at the Mansion House, or at Guildhall. His speeches were full of wit, pleasantry, and point; yet nervous, spirited, and not at all defective in argument. They were all prepared, before they were delivered; and Wilkes made no secret of declaring, that in order to secure their accurate transmission to the public, he always sent a copy of them to William Woodfall, *before* he pronounced them. In private society, particularly at table, he was pre-eminently agreeable; abounding in anecdote; ever gay and convivial; converting his very defects of person, manner, or enunciation, to purposes of merriment or of entertainment. If any man ever was pleasing, who squinted, who had lost his teeth, and lisped, Wilkes might be so esteemed. His powers of conversation survived his other bodily faculties. I have dined in company with him, not long before his decease, when he was extenuated and enfeebled to a great degree; but his tongue retained all its former activity, and seemed to have outlived his other organs. Even in corporeal ruin, and obviously approaching the termination of his career, he formed the charm of the assembly. His celebrity, his courage, his imprisonment, his outlawry, his duels, his intrepid resistance to ministerial and royal persecution, his writings, his adventures; lastly, his triumph and serene evening of life, passed in tranquillity, amidst all the enjoyments of which his decaying frame was susceptible;—for, to the last hour of his existence, he continued a votary to pleasure;—these circumstances, combined in his person, rendered him the most interesting individual of the age in which he lived. Since the death of Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, who died in 1751, and whose life bore some analogy to Wilkes's in various of its features, no man had

occupied so distinguished a place in the public consideration. His name will live as long as the records of history transmit to future times the reign of George the Third.

Notwithstanding the personal collision which may be said to have taken place between the king and him, during the early portion of his majesty's reign, Wilkes, like Burke, nourished in his bosom a strong sentiment of constitutional loyalty. He gave indelible proofs of it during the riots of June, 1780, when *Bull*, one of the members for London, with whom he had long been intimately connected, crouched under Lord George Gordon's mob. And though Wilkes's lent his aid to overturn Lord North's administration, yet he never yoked himself to Fox's car. On the contrary, no sooner had "the coalition" unmasked their battery of "the East India Bill," than Wilkes, rallying to the crown, as the only protection against Fox's ambition, took the warmest part against that measure: acting in 1784, nearly the same part which Burke did eight years later, in 1792, after the French revolution, when he sought shelter behind the throne, against the horrors of anarchy, regicide, and insurrection: horrors which Fox never could, or never would perceive, and for which he even apologised in no small degree.

Such was the general aspect which the House of Commons then presented. Pitt and Sheridan, who have since in different ways occupied so great a share of public attention, had not either of them as yet come forward to public notice and admiration. The latter had indeed risen in his place, as early as the preceding month of November, within three weeks after the meeting of parliament, in order to complain of the facility and impunity with which petitions were presented, complaining of bribery and corruption on the part of members returned to serve in parliament, which petitions often proved eventually frivolous or vexatious. He stood, himself, in that very situation; Mr. Richard Whitworth, one of the representatives for the town of Stafford in the preceding parliament, having just petitioned the house, against the return of Mr. Sheridan and his colleague, the honourable Ed-

ward Monckton, for the same borough. Rigby, on the occasion to which I allude, with the coarse, contemptuous, and insulting ridicule, familiar to him when addressing the house, had treated Sheridan's complaints as meriting no attention. Fox instantly rose to justify and to protect his friend; but the speaker interposing, terminated the conversation. Even while pronouncing the few sentences which he then uttered, the fame of the author of the "*Duenna*," the "*School for Scandal*," and the "*Critic*," was already so well established, as to procure him the greatest attention.

Probably, at no period of George the Third's long reign, which already exceeds that of Henry the Third in duration, have the walls of the House of Commons enclosed so great an assemblage of first-rate talents on the opposition benches, as were there concentrated at the beginning of the year 1781. Their exertions were at once sharpened and propelled by the critical nature of the time and of the contest, which obviously tended to some vast catastrophe, unless a speedy amelioration of our affairs beyond the Atlantic should take place. The treasury bench, though Lord North, Lord George Germain, and Mr. Dundas, still were seated on it, had sustained no ordinary diminution of its lustre, by the removal of Thurlow and of Wedderburn to the upper house: but, on the opposite side, we beheld a constellation of men of genius. In the front stood Fox and Burke, sustained by Dunning and Barré; while Pitt and Sheridan, two of the most resplendent luminaries produced during the course of the eighteenth century, were preparing to unfold their powers. I have endeavoured to present before the reader of 1818, an imperfect picture of the assembly then sitting at Westminster, and to place him, if I may so express myself, under the gallery of the house, as a spectator. In order, however, to form a more complete estimate of the principal individuals who at that time attracted general notice, either as supporters of administration, or as candidates for office whenever the opposition should come into power; it is still requisite to throw a glance over the House of Peers.

The great Earl of Mansfield, though

he had already advanced beyond that period of life, at which the faculties of the human mind usually begin to diminish in vigour, did not appear to have lost any of the acuteness or strength of his intellect. In the court of King's Bench, no less than in parliament, where he constantly attended in his place, his transcendent abilities still excited equal respect and admiration. The friend of Pope, of Bolingbroke, and of Sir William Wyndham, during his youth; he united the finest accomplishments of science, to the most profound knowledge of the laws. In the recent riots of 1780, the populace, whether considering him as inclined to support measures of an arbitrary nature, or supposing him a friend to principles of religious toleration repugnant to their feelings; selected him for the object of their violence. His house and his papers were consumed: but he had happily escaped any personal effects of their rage; and though not individually a member of administration, might be considered as disposed on all occasions, to extend his assistance to the government. Yet did the constitutional and characteristic timidity which distinguished him in his political capacity, prevent his ever standing forward in moments of crisis or danger, like Thurlow and Wedderburn, as the avowed champion of ministerial measures. But, in his judicial character, he made ample amends, and manifested a devotion to the wishes of the court, scarcely exceeded by any example to be adduced even under the Stuart reigns. The accusations brought against Lord Mansfield by Wilkes, in his Letter from Paris, of the "22d of October, 1764," addressed to the electors of Aylesbury, are of so grave a description, that, if founded in truth, a Turkish *cadi* might blush to own them. He positively asserts, that on the evening preceding the two trials in the court of King's Bench, instituted against himself, as the author of the *North Briton*, No. 45, and of the "*Essay on Woman*;" Lord Mansfield sent for his (Wilkes's) solicitor to *his own house*, and desired him to consent to such alterations in the *records*, as would ensure the certainty of Wilkes's conviction. "The chief justice," continues he, "sunk into the crafty attorney,

and made himself a party against the person accused before him as judge, when he ought to have presumed me innocent. My solicitor refused; and against his consent, *the records were there materially altered by his lordship's express orders*; so that I was tried on two new charges, very different from those I had answered. This is, I believe, the most daring violation of the rights of Englishmen, which has been committed by any judge since the time of *Jefferies*. Yet this arbitrary Scottish chief justice still remains unimpeached, except in the hearts of the whole nation." When we read these facts; for, such they must be esteemed, since they remained wholly uncontradicted; we might fancy the transactions to have taken place at Saragossa or at Seville, rather than in Westminster Hall. Scarcely could a Spanish grand inquisitor have outdone the English chief justice. Wilkes continuing his narrative, says, "Several of the jury were by counter notices, signed *summoning officer*, prevented from attending on the day appointed for the trial; while others had not only private notice given them of the *real day*, but, likewise, instructions for their behaviour. To crown the whole, Lord Mansfield, in his charge, *tortured both the law and the fact so grossly*, that the audience were shocked no less at the indecency, than at the partiality of his conduct. I was during all this time, very dangerously ill, with my daughter, at Paris; absolutely incapable of making any personal defence, and indeed totally ignorant of the two new questions on which I was to be tried." It is not without some difficulty, that we can conceive these violations of all justice or equity to have taken place in London, under the reign of George the Third. We might rather suppose them to have been performed under Charles, or James, the Second.

Nor was Wilkes the only champion who stood forward as Lord Mansfield's accuser, at the bar of the English people. With the single exception of the Duke of Grafton, no man high in office, had been so severely treated by the pen of "Junius;" and though time had skinned over the wound, the cicatrice still remained. That able writer,

after pursuing the lord chief justice with inconceivable pertinacity, through all the sinuosities of legal concealment or evasion, under which he attempted to shelter himself; — after comparing him to the most prostitute judges of the most arbitrary reigns; to *Tressillian*, under Richard the Second; and to *Jefferies*, under James the Second; exclaims, — "Who attacks the liberty of the press? Lord Mansfield. Who invades the constitutional power of juries? Lord Mansfield. What judge ever challenged a jurymen, but Lord Mansfield? who was that judge, who, to save the king's brother, affirmed that a man of the first rank and quality, who obtains a verdict in a suit for criminal conversation, is entitled to no greater damages than the meanest mechanic? Lord Mansfield." These, it must be owned, are charges of no common magnitude, and conveyed in no ordinary language. At him, "Junius" levelled his last blows, before he finally disappeared as a political writer. In his parting letter, addressed to Lord Camden, written towards the end of January, 1772, exciting and invoking that nobleman to come forward as the accuser of the lord chief justice of the King's Bench, at the bar of the House of Peers; "Considering," says he, "the situation and abilities of Lord Mansfield, I do not scruple to affirm, with the most solemn appeal to God for my sincerity, that in my judgment, he is the very worst and most dangerous man in the kingdom. Thus far I have done my duty, in endeavouring to bring him to punishment. But mine is an inferior ministerial office in the temple of justice. I have bound the victim, and dragged him to the altar." Severe, and perhaps unmerited as these accusations may appear, yet Lord Mansfield's warmest admirers never attempted to deny, that at every period of time while he presided in the court of King's Bench, his opinions and his decrees, if not adverse to the liberty of the press, and to the freedom of the subject, uniformly leaned towards the crown. His enemies, not without some reason, asserted, that he was better calculated to fill the office of a *Prætor* under Justinian, than to preside as chief criminal judge of this kingdom, in the reign of George the Third.

Lord Loughborough, who owed to Lord North his recent elevation to the peerage, constituted one of his ablest advocates, and most zealous supporters, in that house. Wedderburn had risen through the gradations of the law, amidst the discussions of parliament, side by side with Thurlow. More temperate, pliant, artful, and accommodating in his manners, than the chancellor, he equalled that nobleman in eloquence, if he did not even surpass him. *Churchill*, in one of his satires, has thought proper to describe Wedderburn in colours of the deepest and most malignant dye, heightened by the magic of verse. I believe, it appeared in 1762.

“To mischief train’d, e’en from his mother’s
womb,
Grown old in fraud, tho’ yet in manhood’s
bloom,
Adopting arts by which gay villains rise,
And reach the heights which honest men
despise ;
Mute at the bar, and in the senate loud,
Dull ’mongst the dullest, proudest of the
proud,
A pert prim prater of the northern race,
Guilt in his heart, and famine in his face
Stept forth.”

Nor was Fox much more favourable to Wedderburn, previous to the “Coalition” in 1783, which obliterated all preceding errors on both sides. In November, 1781, on the day when parliament met, Fox, while loading with execrations the American war, and its authors or abettors, selected Wedderburn as an object of his strongest reprobation. Alluding to the language which that eminent lawyer had formerly held, when he designated the contest with America, “to be the opposition of Hancock and his crew, not a war with the people at large;” Fox observed, that “for these sentiments, and not for any other merit that he could discover, except the abusing our fellow subjects beyond the Atlantic, the learned gentleman had been raised to the dignity of a peer.” Notwithstanding these denunciations of party violence, poetic and political, no man in public life possessed more versatility of talents, or abilities better adapted to every situation. He proved himself as refined a courtier at St. James’s as he was an able lawyer at Westmin-

ster. His defence of Lord Clive, when under accusation before the House of Commons, at an earlier period of his majesty’s reign, augmented Wedderburn’s legal, as well as parliamentary reputation. It had been perpetually progressive since that time, and rendered him, whether as a member of the lower or of the upper house, one of the most distinguished ornaments of the long robe.

Nor did the opposition at this time want men of distinguished capacity, professional and political, in the House of Lords, though the Marquis of Rockingham was not to be accounted among the number. His rank, his integrity, and his vast patrimonial property, rather than any intellectual endowments, had placed him at the head of his party. During the short period of time when he formerly filled the post of first lord of the treasury, he had displayed more rectitude of intention, than either vigour or ability. Even his constitution and frame of body, appeared inadequate to the fatigues of an official situation demanding energy and application. Lord Camden, on the contrary, though much more advanced in years, had retained all the powers of mind, combined with personal activity. In debate, he might be esteemed equal to Lord Mansfield himself; and his exertions at every period of his life, in defence of the constitutional liberties of the subject, which gave him a sort of individual superiority to that nobleman, greatly endeared him to the nation. While chief justice to the Court of Common Pleas, he had approved himself a firm and intrepid guardian of the rights of the English people. On the thirtieth of April, 1763, when Wilkes was illegally arrested under a general warrant issued by the two secretaries of state, the Earls of Egremont and Halifax; Sir Charles Pratt, on application being made to him in his judicial capacity, instantly ordered the *habeas corpus* to issue; though the ministers thought proper to evade and to violate it. His name, almost always united with the great Earl of Chatham ever since the accession of George the Third, seemed inseparable from the idea of freedom.

If indefatigable and laborious perti-

nacity could recommend to office, or qualify for public employment, few members of the upper house possessed a better title to that praise, than the Duke of Richmond. However limited might be the range of his ideas, he supplied in some measure by application the deficiency of original talent. His person, manners, and address, were all full of dignity; and the personal beauty which distinguished Mademoiselle de la Querouaille, mistress of Charles the Second, his great grandmother, was not become extinct in him. She is known to have retained her charms, down to a very late period of her life; and the fables related of Ninon de l'Enclos, which Voltaire has exposed, were in some measure verified in the Duchess of Portsmouth. The late George Selwyn, who had seen her at Richmond House in the year 1733; — for, she survived Charles the Second near fifty years — assured me that she was even then possessed of many attractions, though verging towards fourscore, like his nephew Mr. Fox, the duke did not spare the king, when addressing the House of Lords: and he was considered as peculiarly obnoxious at St. James's. Accused by his enemies, of wanting personal courage, he manifested at least no defect of political resolution. At the East India House, in his quality of a proprietor, no less than as a peer of parliament, at Westminster, he was ever active; vigilant in detecting and exposing abuses, real or imaginary; perpetually harassing every department with enquiries; and attacking in turn, the army, the admiralty, and the treasury.

But no individual in the upper house attracted so much national attention from his accomplishments, talents, and extensive information on all subjects of foreign or domestic policy, as the Earl of Shelburne. In the prime of life, and in the full vigour of his faculties, he displayed, whenever he rose to speak, an intimate knowledge of Europe; together with such a variety of matter, as proved him eminently qualified to fill the highest official situation. At an early period of his majesty's reign, he had occupied with great and general approbation, the post of secretary of state for the home department, during more than two years,

between 1766 and 1768. He might therefore justly look forward, on any change of ministers, to be again employed in a similar, or even in a higher place of trust and power. His acquaintance with the continent was minute and accurate, the result of ocular inspection on many points, corrected by reflection; and improved by correspondence or communications with foreigners of eminence, whom he assiduously cultivated and protected. Mr. Fox himself was far inferior to Lord Shelburne in these branches of information. Nor was that nobleman less versed in all the principles of finance and of revenue, than in the other objects of political study that form a statesman. His house, or more properly to speak, his palace in Berkeley-square, which had formerly been erected by the Earl of Bute; formed at once the centre of a considerable party, as well as the asylum of literary taste and science.

It is a fact, that during the latter years of Lord North's administration, he retained three or four clerks in constant pay and employment under his own roof, who were solely occupied in copying state papers or accounts. Every measure of finance, adopted by the first minister, passed, if I may so express myself, through the political alembic of Shelburne House, where it was examined and severely discussed. There, while Dunning and Barré met to settle their plan of action as members of the opposition in the House of Commons; Jackson, who likewise sat in the same assembly for New Romney, and the variety of whose information had acquired him the name of "Omniscient Jackson," furnished every species of legal or general knowledge. Dr. Price and Mr. Baring produced financial plans, or made arithmetical calculations, meant to controvert and overturn, or to expose, those of the first lord of the treasury: while Dr. Priestley, who lived under the Earl of Shelburne's personal protection (just as the celebrated *Hobbs* had done at Chatsworth, under the immediate patronage of the Earls of Devonshire, in the preceding century); prosecuted in the midst of London his philosophical and chemical researches. Nor ought I to omit in this

list of extraordinary men, the distinguished names of Jervis, and of Jekyll; one of whom has risen to such naval honours and dignities; while the other has attained to an equal eminence at the bar, as he enjoys from the charms of his conversation, in private society.

In his person, manners, and address, the earl of Shelburne wanted no external quality requisite to captivate or conciliate mankind. Affable, polite, communicative, and courting popularity, he drew round him a number of followers or adherents. His personal courage was indisputable. Splendid and hospitable at his table, he equally delighted his guests by the charms of his conversation and society. In his magnificent library, one of the finest of its kind in England, he could appear as a philosopher and a man of letters. With such various endowments of mind, sustained by rank and fortune, he necessarily excited universal consideration, and seemed to be pointed out by nature for the first employments. But, the confidence which his moral character inspired, did not equal the reputation of his abilities. His adversaries accused him of systematic duplicity and insincerity. They even asserted, that unless all the rules of physiognomy were set at defiance, his very countenance and features eloquently indicated falsehood. In order to fix upon him so injurious an imputation, they gave him the epithet of *Malagrida*, from the name of a Portuguese Jesuit, well known in the modern history of that kingdom. And these insinuations, though not perhaps accompanied with proofs, were nevertheless, either from the credulity, or from the malignity of mankind, widely circulated, as well as very generally believed, throughout the nation.

[23d — 31st January.] If any crisis ever demanded a first minister of energy, firmness, and resources of character, it was assuredly the portion of the present reign on which we are about to enter, including the last fourteen months of Lord North's long administration. There may since that time have been moments of greater alarm, under Mr. Pitt, Mr. Addington, or Mr. Percival; but, none of such ministerial and national depression. Even when Bonaparte seemed to bestride the continent from

west to east; while his flotilla menaced us with monthly invasion; — when the Southern coast was covered with Martello Towers, from Beachy Head to Romney Marsh; and the Corsican emperor having vanquished Europe, seemed only to reserve England, as Polypheme does Ulysses, for his last sacrifice; — yet even then, though we felt apprehension, the spirit and the confidence of the country were fully commensurate to the impending or apparent danger. The sovereign was an object of affection and of universal respect. It was a combat of morals and of patriotism, against the principle of rapine, disorganization, and ferocious military despotism; while the continental governments and people, however subjected they themselves might be, put up secret prayers for our escape and success. But in 1781, Lord North had neither internal, nor foreign auxiliaries. Which ever way he directed his view, it was met by calamity, or defeat, or accumulating difficulties. Under such circumstances, it may rather excite surprise that he resisted so long, than that he should ultimately have sunk beneath the pressure. No sooner had parliament re-assembled after the adjournment, than the reclamations or complaints which had been repressed during the recess, burst out with a vehemence proportioned to their preceeding delay. While General Smith called the attention of the minister and the house, to the alarming condition of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, where the newly instituted court of judicature had commenced a sort of civil war against the supreme government; the Island of Barbadoes, desolated by the hurricane of which I have already made mention; through its agent, a member of the house, in terms calculated to awaken commiseration in every bosom, besought administration to extend some immediate relief to their almost indescribable wants.

Great as were these misfortunes, and deeply affecting the British empire at its two extremities, a more serious subject of contemplation, because it was one much nearer home, engrossed universal attention. I mean the manifesto presented by Lord North, at the same time that he delivered a message from his

majesty, announcing the commencement of hostilities against Holland. Never, probably, in the history of modern nations, was any state paper drawn up with more temper, moderation, and even a spirit of conciliation! The king lamented in every line, the painful necessity imposed on him, to resent the infractions of treaty committed by his ancient allies, the Dutch. But the source of the evil lay in the depression of Great Britain, already surrounded by enemies, and apparently unequal to protracting the struggle. In the course of a long debate that ensued upon the address proposed to be presented to the sovereign, which was opposed on factious, rather than on solid grounds of argument; Lord North, in reply to Burke observed, that "our national difficulties were unquestionably great; but, he trusted, by no means insuperable." "I am neither disposed," added he, "to conceal their magnitude, nor afraid to encounter them; because I am fully convinced that the means possessed by this country, when vigorously exerted, constitute the only mode of obtaining a just and an honourable peace." These magnanimous sentiments, which might have become the first Mr. Pitt in 1758, or his son in 1805; both which were periods of universal dejection, received from Fox, from Townsend, from Lord John Cavendish, and from Dunning, every injurious or contumelious epithet; accompanied by reproaches for having, as they falsely asserted, driven Holland into the arms of the House of Bourbon. The minister did not, however, want defenders on that evening; among whom, though the most inconsiderable in every sense, I might name myself. Nor did the division deceive his hopes, as he carried the proposed address by a majority of seventy-nine. I was among the number of those members who went up with it to St. James's, where it met from his majesty the most gracious reception.

[1st of February.] I wish it were in my power to convey an adequate idea to the reader, of 1818, and to transport him to the debate that took place when Fox moved a censure on the administration, for having advised his majesty to confer on Palliser the government of

Greenwich Hospital. All the first orators who graced the opposition benches, came forward in succession. Palliser and Kepple faced each other; the former admiral seated near the minister; the latter opposite to him; sustained by his numerous, zealous, and eloquent partizans. The events of the 27th of July, 1778, — a day marked by so many painful recollections, — were once more retracted, discussed, and agitated with all the violence of mutual animosity. Fox opened the subject in a masterly manner; mingling in his mode of managing it, not less art, than eloquence or argument. Nor did he spare, in certain parts of his discourse, the king himself; though in compliance with the forms of parliament, he abstained from expressly naming the sovereign. Keppel had been recently rejected as member for Windsor, which borough thought proper to return, as one of their representatives, Mr. Powney, a gentleman of independent fortune in the vicinity. To this circumstance, as having been produced by royal interference, Fox alluded. "And what," exclaimed he exultingly, "is the consequence! The county of Surrey, which portion of England beheld with indignation the oppression practised in his person; who saw the enormous influence of the crown opposed to virtue, popularity, and reputation; opened their arms to receive him, and invited him to become their representative. Thus, oppression produced its opposite effect; and my honourable relation, expelled from a place which he had represented in successive parliaments, by the influence of the crown, is returned to this assembly for a great and opulent county."

Lord North, in his reply to Fox, did not omit to give the most pointed denial to the assertion that Keppel had been driven from Windsor, by the means to which allusion was made; adding, that "the honourable gentleman well knew the fact not to be true, and only threw out the imputation, merely with a view to inflame the passions of his audience." Disdaining, on an occasion so grave and weighty, to avail himself of his customary weapons, ridicule and pleasantry, the first lord of the treasury, in a speech replete with sound sense and strong

reasoning, combated Fox's propositions; reminded him of the frenzy which had agitated London for three nights, when a lawless and unrestrained mob compelled the peaceful inhabitants to illuminate for a victory which had never been gained; and attributed, not to conviction, but to intimidation, the vote of thanks to Keppel carried in the last House of Commons, under those circumstances. On one point only Lord North indulged for a few moments, that vein of genuine humour and playful wit, which so eminently characterised him. Fox having asserted roundly, that "Palliser's resignation of his places and employments, formed a tacit admission of his criminality." Lord North classically exclaimed,

"Quam temere nosmet legem sancimus iniquam!"

"Some men," continued he, "resign their places, for the sake of the public quiet. Others resign from shrewd arithmetical calculations, that it may be more judicious to give up a place of small value now, in order to get a better, some time hence. Others again act thus from political foresight. They discover an approaching storm; they 'snuff it gathering in the sky;' they perceive that an administration totters, and they quit the falling fabric, in expectation of coming into high office, by joining the opposite party. For my part, I believe the vice admiral resigned from a most laudable motive, in order to restore the public tranquillity, which had been overturned by the madness of the times."

Captain George Johnstone, or as he was more commonly denominated, Commodore Johnstone, a man who has attained a considerable degree of celebrity during this portion of the reign of George the Third, rising for the first time since the meeting of the present parliament, took no ordinary part in the debate. Nature had cast him in a coarse, but a vigorous mould, and had endowed him with corresponding or analogous faculties of mind. Irascible, intemperate, violent, he was a warm and zealous friend; but an implacable enemy. He possessed a species of ardent, impetuous, half savage eloquence, re-

strained by no delicacy of language; yet capable of powerfully affecting his hearers by the display of information, by his energetic appeals to their passions, and by his gesticulations which came in aid of his oratory. As a naval officer of rank and experience, when addressing the house on a naval question, he might justly lay claim to attention. He had proved himself nevertheless more a sagacious politician, than an able commander; and looked rather to parliamentary talents, than to maritime services, for elevating him in life, as well as for enabling him to acquire the honours or emoluments of his profession. Johnstone, while he admitted that Keppel was individually a brave, a gallant, and a meritorious officer; inveighed in terms the most severe against the general dispositions which he had made previous to engaging the fleet of France, on the memorable 27th of July. Of that action Johnstone spoke, as of the most unfortunate which Great Britain had ever witnessed; "in consequence of which, the French became convinced by their own experience, that on a summer's day, they could engage an English fleet superior in every point of view, and yet get safe back to their own harbours." He treated with indignant ridicule, the expression used by Keppel, when he allowed d'Orvilliers to retire unmolested, under a supposition that "he would fight it out fairly next morning," instead of renewing the engagement on the same evening: adding, that he entertained no doubt, the honorable admiral himself, if he were to fight the battle over again, would conduct it in a very different manner. Then adverting to the disgraceful tumults, and still more disgraceful illuminations, on occasion of the pretended advantage gained over France, "Oh! God!" said he, raising his eyes, and covering with both hands his face, "London, illuminated during three successive nights, on account of the national glory acquired on the 27th of July! No man of common sense could credit it." Towards the conclusion of his speech, Johnstone, in the most pointed language, after vindicating Lord Sandwich in his official character, as first lord of the admiralty, from the imputations of various kinds thrown on

against his naval administration; expressed his concern and surprise at seeing so respectable a name as that of Admiral Keppel, subscribed to a list of factious resolutions adopted by a Surrey committee, declaring the American war to be an unjust enterprise. "What opinion," observed he, "must officers who are proceeding to that quarter of the globe, form of a naval commander, so long the object of their respect; who now joins in declaring that every man who serves against the insurgents beyond the Atlantic, is no better than a pirate, and that the contest itself is a war of injustice and oppression!"

Proceeding in this strain of accusation, and carried away by the warmth of his irritable temper, which, like that of Burke, was by no means always under the control of reason, Johnstone arraigned the opinions delivered from the opposition benches, on the late debate relative to the declaration of war against Holland, as dangerous, if not fatal in their consequences to the national welfare. He even charged, though not by name, yet by unavoidable implication, Fox, as well as his friends who sat near him, with the criminality of advocates employed by the enemies of England, to traduce, to degrade, and to overturn her greatness. Apprehensive probably of the effect which such a denunciation might produce on the public mind, Mr. Thomas Townsend starting up, called the commodore to order; and though Rigby interposed to justify the observations that he had made, as arising out of the subject under discussion; consequently as strictly conformable to the acknowledged rules of debate; yet Johnstone, whose understanding had been allowed a few moments to operate, aware of the delicate ground on which he was treading, declined to add another word. The house in vain encouraged him to proceed, by cries of Go on! Go on! He sat down, and Keppel availed himself of the pause, to present to the house his sentiments on the question. In a speech of considerable length, he endeavoured to throw the blame of the failure of the 27th of July, on Palliser; though he was necessitated to admit the personal

efforts to break the French line, made by that gallant officer. He owned that he no more liked the mention of the unfortunate day itself, than did the commodore; while he affected at the same time to thank his honorable relation, for affording him the present occasion of justifying himself to the House of Commons and to his country.

Sir Hugh Palliser now rose, and directed his discourse to Fox, rather than to the admiral who had just preceded him. The matter of his address made amends for any deficiencies in its delivery, and enforced universal attention. After reproaching Fox with want of candour, if not of veracity, in the statement made by him of the motives that had produced the resignation of his own employments; Sir Hugh assured him that it did not proceed from any apprehension of his threats, nor from any consciousness of misconduct in himself. "Fear," continued he, "is the tax which conscience pays to guilt. Let those experience it, who calumniate the characters of others, and afterwards object to hear the injured party in his exculpation! I was indeed once afraid, I confess. I was afraid of a frantic, deluded, furious populace, who forced their way into my house, destroyed my property, and would have torn me in pieces, if the arrival of a detachment of the guards sent to my relief, had not critically rescued me from their ferocity. I was necessitated to abscond, and from the place of my concealment, I wrote my letter of resignation. In so acting, I imitated the precedent set me by one of the most celebrated naval commanders known in modern history. I mean, the famous Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp. He, under the operation of popular prejudice and outrage, laid down his commission, in order to pacify the public: but he subsequently resumed it under more auspicious circumstances, and rendered the highest services to his native country." Having modestly, but distinctly stated the share that he took in the engagement of the 27th of July; where, by the universal confession of every officer present, he had manifested uncommon intrepidity, and had received in his ship, the "Formidable," the exclusive fire of the whole French line;

he concluded by pointing some severe observations against Burke, as well as against Keppel: leaving on my mind, and I believe, on that of every unprejudiced hearer, the strongest conviction of his merits, no less than of the persecution that he had endured.

Burke may be said to have terminated this very interesting discussion, rising as soon as Palliser sat down; no doubt with the design of obliterating the impression made on the house, by the preceding speaker. If eloquence, ingenuity, and a perfect acquaintance with every fact or minute detail connected with the subject, could efface that impression, and substitute in its place an opposite sentiment, he must have succeeded: — for, never were more brilliant, various, and captivating powers of intellect exhibited, than by Burke on that evening. He left no feature of the subject untouched, and all touched with a master hand. Against Palliser he directed the shafts of his argumentative severity; against Lord North, the keener arrows of ridicule and irony; nor did he by any means omit Johnstone, who attracted his full proportion of both those weapons of attack. The finest specimen of ludicrous and metaphorical description ever perhaps given even by Burke himself, within the walls of the House of Commons, he pointed against the first minister. That nobleman found himself obliged to call in the assistance of Mansfield, the solicitor general, in order to enable him to shape his proposed amendments to Fox's motion for declaring "the appointment of Palliser to be governor of Greenwich Hospital, a measure totally subversive of the discipline, and derogatory to the honour of the navy." Some minutes having elapsed, while the precise words proper to be adopted, were under consideration; Burke observed, that "the noble lord had been employed in *knotting* and *splicing* the motion, and in *fishing* its mast;" at the same time remarking (in allusion to his consultation with the solicitor general), that "he need not have *fired a gun to leeward*, as a signal of distress, it being obvious that his *mizen top masts* were all shot away." These metaphors, drawn from the technical terms of the very service respecting which the house had been so

long engaged in debate, operated with inconceivable effect on the muscles of the assembly; and on none more forcibly than on those of the first minister, against whom they were specially directed. He found himself for once overwhelmed by the very artillery which he commonly employed against his opponents, and in the use of which he so much excelled. The motion was at length negatived, though only by a majority of *sixty-five*; the opposition dividing 149; while administration had 214 votes. Palliser continued to retain the government of Greenwich Hospital, down to the period of his decease in 1796; but, no first lord of the admiralty ever ventured to employ him again in the line of his profession.

[26th February.] Among the circumstances which will always render the session of 1781 peculiarly interesting to posterity, must be accounted the active appearance of Pitt and of Sheridan, on the floor of the House of Commons. They both may be said to have commenced their brilliant parliamentary career, nearly at the same time, within a few days of each other. Both spoke on the side of opposition, and both were received with marked approbation, by every part of their audience. I was present, when each of them rose for the first time. Pitt led the way, on the second reading of Burke's bill for "the Reformation of the King's Household;" which, though rejected in the last session of the preceding parliament, its author did not the less bring forward anew, towards the close of the month of February. He reiterated, on moving for leave to bring in the bill, the same encomiums upon the salutary retrenchments made by Necker, with which he had entertained the house in 1780; extolled the discernment of Louis the Sixteenth, in making choice of such a minister, for superintendant of the finances; and asserted, that the selection would produce more substantial benefit, as well as more solid glory to his reign, than had resulted from all the deeds of Henry the Fourth. "We want," said he, "some such great and enlightened statesman, who will strike out new and untried paths, adapted to the pressure of the times. Here no measures are adopted, except on a

narrow, fraudulent scale, producing temporary supplies by retails of misfortune. *Tædet harum formarum!* These are only delusive phantoms. Give me substance and reality; — *Corpus solidum, et succi plenum!* When the financial resources of the French monarchy were believed to be exhausted, and when every ordinary channel of revenue was known to be dried up, Mr. Necker opened a mine of national wealth; dug down into it; reached the fountain head of productive receipt; and by demolishing the dams that impeded the current of wealth, he immediately brought into the exchequer, the value of near six hundred useless places." Such were the eulogiums pronounced upon the banker of Copet, whose ill combined and illusive plans, calculated only to acquire popularity at the expense of his unfortunate master, plunged France into irretrievable embarrassments, and led ultimately to the subversion of the monarchy! The measures, moreover, adopted by an arbitrary prince for maintaining a war, in which, contrary to every maxim of wise policy, no less than by the subversion of all treaties subsisting between France and England, he had engaged with us; did not appear, in the opinion of impartial men, to form a proper model for our imitation. After a debate of considerable length, the bill was rejected only by a majority of forty-three votes, in a very full house, where four hundred and twenty-three members were present. Great expectations having been formed of Pitt, a sort of anxious impatience for his coming forward pervaded the assembly; which was strongly impressed, from common report, with a belief of his hereditary talents and eloquence. He unquestionably commenced under most auspicious circumstances; his birth, and his very name, by resuscitating as it were the first Earl of Chatham, whose memory awakened such animating recollections, preparing every ear to be attentive; and thus removing all the impediments that present themselves in the way of ordinary men, when attempting to address parliament. But, sanguine as might be the opinions entertained of his ability, he far exceeded them; seeming to attain at his outset, that object, which other candidates for public fame or favour, slowly and

laboriously effect, by length of time and regular gradations.

It was in reply to Lord Nugent that Pitt first broke silence, from under the gallery, on the opposition side of the house. The same composure, self-possession, and imposing dignity of manner, which afterwards so eminently characterized him when seated on the treasury bench; distinguished him in this first essay of his powers, though he then wanted three months to have completed his twenty-second year. The same nervous, correct, and polished diction, free from any inaccuracy of language, or embarrassment of deportment, which, as first minister, he subsequently displayed, were equally manifested on this occasion. Formed for a popular assembly, he seemed made to guide its deliberations, from the first moment that he addressed the members composing it. The debate of that evening which first introduced so distinguished an individual to the knowledge of his countrymen as a candidate for office stands so much apart from the ordinary discussions of parliament; and the particulars of it will unquestionably excite so warm a curiosity, that I shall endeavour to retrace some of its features. And I can do it with the greater facility, as well as accuracy, having not only been in my place on that night as a member of the house, but taken an active part in it. I spoke at considerable length *against* the bill; replied to Burke's encomiums on Necker, and treated the plans of that Genevese financier, nearly in the same manner as I have since written respecting them. These observations I venture to make, in order to show that in all I may state, I am not composing from books, but relating such facts as remain impressed on my memory, and have survived the lapse of six and thirty years. I shall therefore proceed, without heeding the malevolent comments that may be made on my vanity and egotism; for the mention of myself as in any manner connected with Mr. Pitt's entrance on public life,

Lord Nugent, while he professed himself a friend to economy, strongly opposed Burke's bill on various grounds; as destroying the independence of the sovereign, while it would injure the

frame of the British constitution, by subverting the nice equipoise on which depended its permanence and stability. He afterwards treated the projected reform to be made in the royal household, as not less visionary or impracticable, than the "Commonwealth" of Plato in antiquity, or than Sir Thomas More's "Utopia." Adding, that however much he might desire to introduce all becoming reductions of expense about the king's court and person, he never would vote for setting him down to an ordinary, or render him a more dependent man than any of his subjects. Against these opinions or arguments, Mr. Pitt directed all the force of his eloquence. The ministers, he said, and they only, were culpable in not having come forward spontaneously, to propose a diminution of the civil list. If, however, instead of performing their duty to a burthened and impoverished country, they interposed to prevent the benignity of the monarch, to check the free exercise of his natural bounty, to stop the tide of royal sympathy, and to close up his paternal emotions; there could exist no good reason, why, because administration neglected, or abused its trust, the representatives of the people should imitate so pernicious and criminal an example. It might be asserted that the proposed measure would place the crown in a state of tutelage: but, the guardianship of a British House of Commons, could not surely be disgraceful to a constitutional prince. Were magnificence and retrenchment incompatible? Or was 200,000*l.* a year, which the bill proposed to take from useless state, and to pour into the public purse, so inconsiderable a saving as to be unworthy of parliamentary attention? — Towards the conclusion of his speech, which, I think, did not exceed in duration sixteen or seventeen minutes, he enlarged on the nature of the civil list itself; which, he said, was originally granted, not for the personal pleasures or gratifications of his majesty, but for public purposes. Those objects, embracing the splendour of the throne, he detailed; terminating by the expression of the extreme reluctance with which, in the awful state of the empire, convulsed and bleeding on every side, his faithful com-

mons, who had voted him the revenue that he enjoyed, now applied to him to part with a portion of it, as a sacrifice to their necessities.

Such, as far as I am able to recall it, was the purport of Mr. Pitt's opening address to parliament. It impressed, more from the judgment, the diction, and the calm solemnity of manner, that pervaded and characterized it from its commencement to its close, than from the brilliancy or superiority of the matter. While he ardently supported the measure, he rather soothed and flattered, than wounded the feelings of the king, against whom it was in a certain degree directed. He seemed to possess himself as much, as though he had pronounced the speech in his own closet: but there was no display of studied or classic images in any part of it; nothing gaudy, superfluous, or unnecessary. The statesman, not the student, or the advocate, or the candidate for popular applause, characterized it. Lord John Townsend (then Mr. John Townsend), who spoke in an early stage of the debate, before Mr. Pitt rose; manifested more talents, and drew his allusions from more cultivated sources of information, than were exhibited by Pitt; but, he by no means made a similar impression on the audience. As if the evening of the 26th of February was destined for the opening display of parliamentary ability; by men who have since occupied so high a place in the public consideration; the present Earl of Lauderdale, then Viscount Maitland, commenced his very useful and distinguished career, only about an hour later than Pitt. Like him, Lord Maitland, then a very young man, brought his powerful resources of mind, to aid of opposition. In a speech, full of animation, indignant at the fallen state to which ministers, as he asserted, had reduced their sovereign and their country; he traced the whole calamity up to the prosecution of a war, that he stigmatized with the epithets of *mad* and *ruinous*. Nor did he spare the *house*, more than the *administration*; declaring his conviction that the majority supported measures, which only corruption could induce them to approve. He tempered nevertheless these ebullitions of patriotic rage, by profes-

sions of the warmest attachment to the person, the virtues, and the glory of the reigning monarch; and unquestionably gave, in his first attempt to address parliament, an earnest of those endowments, which during near forty years have been exerted in various ways for the public benefit, either in the House of Commons, or in the House of Peers.

To return to Pitt. — All men beheld in him at once a future minister; and the opposition, overjoyed at such an accession of strength, vied with each other in their encomiums, as well as in their predictions of his certain elevation. Burke exclaimed, that “he was not merely a chip of the old block, but the old block itself.” Nor did Fox do less justice to the talents of this new competitor for power, popularity, and employment. Having carried him to Brookes’s Club, a few days afterwards, Pitt was elected a member of that society; which then comprehended almost all the men of rank and great talents throughout the kingdom, who were engaged in parliamentary opposition to ministers. It is a fact, that Pitt remained during several years, a member of Brookes’s; but he rarely, if ever, appeared there, after he came into office. So nice was his tact, so deep his penetration, and in so different a mould was he cast from Fox, that even on his first reception in St. James’s-street, though it was of the most flattering description, he was not dazzled nor won by it. On the contrary, he held back, and never coalesced with that party, beyond external appearances. Fox himself soon perceived the coldness of his new ally, for whom play had no attractions, and who beheld a faro table without emotion; though neither he nor Burke were probably aware of the profound and regulated, but soaring ambition, which animated him to aspire, without passing through any intermediate stage, to occupy the first employments of the state. Still less could they apprehend or foresee, that he would form during the greater part of their future lives, the principal and insurmountable bar to their own attainment, or permanent enjoyment, of office.

Mr. Pitt, when he thus rose for the first time, represented the borough of Appleby in Westmoreland, and was in-

debted for his seat in the house, to Sir James Lowther; whose property and parliamentary influence, which, in the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland were immense, enabled him to bring seven or eight members into that assembly. Sir James was rewarded by Mr. Pitt, for this, and for other services, with an English earldom, little more than three years afterwards. But he eagerly embraced the first occasion which presented itself, to obtain a more independent seat in parliament, and to emancipate himself from any dependence on, or personal connexion with, the Lowther family. The matrimonial alliance of Sir James with Lord Bute, one of whose daughters he had married; the name of *Lowther*, which had been rendered unpopular, if not odious, by the memorable contest with the Duke of Portland, in the beginning of the present reign; and even the character of Sir James Lowther himself, tyrannical, overbearing, violent, and frequently under no restraint of temper, or of reason; — all these combined motives impelled Mr. Pitt to seek elsewhere, a more independent title to call himself one of the representatives of the people; particularly after his elevation to the head of the treasury. He was nevertheless compelled to wait for such an occasion, till the dissolution of parliament in March, 1784; during all which period he sat for Appleby, even when chancellor of the exchequer, under Lord Shelburne’s administration, and afterwards when first lord of the treasury. At length, in the spring of 1784, his ministerial weight, or, as *Junius* denominates it, “the spirit of distributing prebends and bishopricks,” rather than his individual qualities and interest, enabled him to turn out Lord John Townsend (then Mr. John Townsend), and to place himself at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge; an election, and a seat, in every sense gratifying to his feelings.

It was not, indeed, to the personal friendship of Sir James Lowther, that he originally owed his entrance into the House of Commons. He was indebted for that advantage, which conducted him with such rapidity, to the highest offices of state, principally, if not solely, to the late Duke of Rutland, a nobleman of

nearly the same age as Mr. Pitt. The early intimacy which subsisted between them at the University of Cambridge, was cemented by the political ties that had formerly united their fathers, the Marquis of Granby, and the Earl of Chatham, during the reign of George the Second. As every circumstance, connected with the public life and career of such a man as Mr. Pitt, becomes interesting; I shall relate from my own personal knowledge, some facts not undeserving of commemoration, upon this subject.

Among the persons who were admitted to the familiarity of the late Duke of Rutland, and who had access to him at almost all hours, about this time, was a man of the name of Kirkpatrick, then well known on the turf at Newmarket. Possessing a small property at Penrith, in the county of Cumberland, within a few miles of Lowther Hall, he was much protected by Sir James Lowther, with whom he maintained a constant and habitual intercourse. The duke and Sir James, both, treated him as a sort of buffoon, who diverted them by his eccentricities; and he was frequently employed between them on private errands or messages. During the autumn of the year 1780 the duke despatched Kirkpatrick from his house in Arlington-street, to Sir James Lowther, who resided in Charles-street, Berkeley-square; with a verbal request, that "Sir James would do him the favour, if possible, to reserve a seat among his boroughs, for a friend of the duke's, Mr. William Pitt, a younger son of the Earl of Chatham." Kirkpatrick has often related to me the particulars of his interview and conversation with Sir James Lowther, whom he found in the act of shaving himself. "Well, Kirk," for so he was always denominated; said Sir James, "what may be your business?" I am come from Arlington-street," answered he, "with a message to you from the duke." "What are his commands?" replied Sir James. "He requests that you will oblige him, by reserving a seat for a friend of his, Mr. Pitt, Lord Chatham's brother, a young gentleman of vast abilities, whom the duke wishes to bring into parliament." "I wish he had sent sooner to me;" returned he: "Is he

very anxious about it, Kirk?" "Exceedingly so, you may be assured." "Then go back to the duke," was his reply, "and tell him that I will see him in the course of this day, and we will talk the matter over together." Kirkpatrick carried back the answer: Sir James Lowther and the Duke of Rutland having met, the eventual consequence of their interview was, that Mr. Pitt came in for Appleby. Not, however, at the general election which took place in September, 1780; Mr. William Lowther, the present Earl of Lonsdale, having succeeded in making his election for Carlisle, as well as for Appleby, vacated his seat for the latter place, after the meeting of parliament, and Mr. Pitt was then returned for that borough. This event did not happen before the beginning of 1781, towards the close of January, when he took the oaths and his seat. He remained silent about four weeks, before he rose and pronounced his first speech.

Having been brought up, as is universally known, to the profession of the law, he went the Western Circuit, as a barrister, in the spring of the year 1780. But he unquestionably meditated very early in life a shorter, and more brilliant, though perhaps not a less laborious, mode of attaining to personal and political elevation. He could not be ignorant of the prodigious powers with which nature had endowed him; which talents, his father, who must equally have perceived them, had cultivated with the utmost care. A son of the great Earl of Chatham, so gifted by Providence, however narrow might be his fortune, yet could not experience much difficulty in procuring entrance into the House of Commons; and never was any juncture more propitious for his surmounting all the ordinary impediments in the way to high employment. In 1781, Lord North palpably and evidently verged towards his extinction as first minister. With him, it was obvious, all his colleagues in the cabinet must pass away, and a new order of things would arise. America having nearly effected her emancipation from British supremacy, peace, it was probable, would follow that event, at no great distance of time. The king was in a very high degree

unpopular; while Fox had become an object of general attachment throughout the country, in defiance of his excesses, principally by the steady opposition which he had given to the American war. But, both those circumstances rendered him odious to his majesty, who disliked his political principles, and reprobated his personal irregularities. Lord Rockingham, and the Duke of Portland, though mild, virtuous, and respectable individuals, were only great names, and heads of a party. It was impossible for the sovereign, even if he had wished it, to call the Duke of Grafton back to office; Lord Bute himself would have been less obnoxious to the country. No individual in either House of Parliament, except Lord Shelburne, remained therefore, who could rationally aspire to succeed Lord North, unless by violence, and against the king's inclination.

Mr. Pitt's youth might indeed seem at first sight, an insurmountable impediment to his being placed in a cabinet office, without first passing through the intermediate stages. But, common rules and precedents did not apply to him, whose hereditary claims to national regard, as the living representative of that great minister who had humbled the House of Bourbon, disposed all men to consider him with predilection. Mr. Fox derived no such moral inheritance from his father; whose memory, far from being embalmed in the veneration of the English people, laboured on the contrary, under imputations of peculation the most generally diffused. There existed therefore, no solid obstacle to Mr. Pitt's speedy attainment, even of the greatest ministerial situations, in the course of a very short time. And when we contemplate the range of his mind, the very limited fortune that he possessed, the coldness of his constitution, the dominion which he exercised over his passions, the expansion of his intellect, the splendour of his eloquence, and the immeasurable ambition or thirst of power which impelled him; we may give him credit for having, almost as soon as he came into parliament, foreseen, anticipated, and confidently calculated on, his soon reaching the object of his exertions.

[March.] Sheridan,* on the other hand, notwithstanding the extent and variety of his endowments, which many persons may perhaps consider to have been even superior to those of Mr. Pitt himself; did not instantly take possession of the house in the same commanding manner. The reason was obvious. Though Sheridan manifested, from the first time that he presented himself to public notice as a speaker, the greatest talents for debate; yet he found many impediments, prejudices, and obstacles, to surmount in his progress. His theatrical connections, as manager of Drury Lane, exposed him to attacks, which a man of less wit, suavity of disposition, and ascertained spirit, could not have parried. Many persons thought, perhaps very illiberally, that a member of the legislature should not be the conductor of a public theatre. At this vulnerable part, malevolence or satire directed its blows, before Sheridan was scarcely seated in the house. I remember an instance of it which took place during the debate of the 26th of February, when Pitt first presented himself to public notice. Courtenay, one of the two members for Tamworth, who was then secretary to the master general of the ordnance (Lord Townsend), possessed a very uncommon and eccentric species of humour; original, classic, even attic; allied to and sustained by learning; inexhaustible, and often irresistible in its effect on the muscles: but, always coarse, frequently licentious, or at least, indecorous; and rarely under a becoming restraint. His wit seemed indeed more adapted to a tavern, or to a convivial board, than to the grave deliberations of such an assembly as the House of Commons. Scarcely will the fact obtain belief, yet it is not the less true, that Courtenay ventured to cite in the course of one of his speeches, some of the most exceptionable lines in Prior's "*Paulo Purganti*," without being called to order. Ridicule constituted his never failing arm, which he wielded with inconceivable facility, though without grace or elegance. Having directed this engine against Burke's bill for the Reduction of the Civil List, and held up the measure to contempt or derision, under many inge-

nious points of view, as being equally nugatory, fallacious, and unbecoming a great nation to adopt: Sheridan reprehended him for thus introducing a style of debate altogether unbecoming the gravity of a legislative body, convened to deliberate on great national objects or interests. No sooner had he sat down, than Courtenay, who was not easily disconcerted, rising in his place, observed, that "the honourable gentleman seemed to be inimical to mirth and to wit *in any house except his own.*" This allusion, which did not admit of being misunderstood, and which touched upon Sheridan's histrionic or dramatic occupations; would probably, in defiance of his characteristic equality of mind, have provoked some reply, perhaps a severe or acrimonious retort, if the speaker, apprehensive of the consequence, had not interposed his authority, and interdicted the further prosecution of such personalities. Pitt afterwards attempted, with even worse success than Courtenay, to renew a similar mode of annoyance: — for, it could deserve no other epithet. Sheridan, however, not only repelled, but repulsed his antagonist, though then seated on the treasury bench, in the plenitude of ministerial power.

While we are contemplating the outset in parliament of these two celebrated men, it would be unfair not to recollect that Mr. Pitt, when he rose for the first time, spoke *in reply*. Sheridan, who, though he had previously risen two or three times in the house, may be said to have commenced his career, on the fifth of March, by introducing three motions, respecting "the interference of an armed force in suppressing the riots of June, 1780;" must naturally have arranged his ideas with more order and precision, than it was possible to do in answer to a preceding speech. In fact, he won his way by superior talent, good humour, and argument, which enabled him to triumph over every difficulty. Mr. Pitt might be said to descend, as from an eminence, on the house. Sheridan laboured up hill, with slow, but uniform pace, sustained altogether by his own prodigious abilities, admirable wit, and insuperable command of temper, all which were powerfully seconded by

Fox's steady friendship. His father, though a man of genius, could lend him no assistance. Old Sheridan was, on the contrary, in such contracted circumstances, as to have been compelled, for his support, some years after the period of which I am now speaking, to give lectures, at a very low price, on dramatic elocution or declamation, at a public room, in Gerrard-street, Soho. Henderson, the celebrated actor, was, I believe, his coadjutor in this species of exhibition.

No individual in my time, Burke himself not excepted, owed less to fortune, or was more indebted to nature, for his vast reputation and success, than Sheridan. He did not, however, succeed in the object of his speech, which evidently meant to throw a severe, though an indirect censure, on the sovereign, as well as on the administration, for issuing those orders which had rescued London from the last effects of violence and outrage. With great severity he inveighed against the miserable police of Westminster, as altogether inadequate to the protection of its inhabitants; and he attempted to criminate the ministers for not having come down to the house, and demanded a bill of indemnity for their conduct, in calling to their assistance the military force. Throughout his whole address to parliament on this occasion, he was temperate, measured, argumentative, and impressive: but, unlike his general style of declamation, he neither had recourse to wit, to ridicule, or satire, as auxiliaries. Lord North did justice to the ability, as Fox did, in animated language, to the energy and elegance of Sheridan's speech. It was seconded by Colonel Fitzpatrick, who treated the mobs of June, 1780, as a contemptible assemblage of unarmed and undisciplined rabble, only rendered formidable by the pusillanimous or criminal inactivity of the civil magistrates. The riots themselves, which he had been personally called on to quell, he denominated a "*Guerre des pots de chambre,*" in which a soldier could only find subject of mortification: adding, that to suppose the military power capable of overturning the constitution, at the order of the sovereign, was a libel on the profession. The first minister, in his re-

ply, observed, that while protecting the person, and securing the property of his majesty's subjects, attacked by a lawless, fanatical, or infuriated populace, he felt no dread of a prosecution. Whenever any such legal attack should be made on him, for having authorized the troops to act against the rioters, it would be time enough to apply to parliament on the business. Meanwhile he disdained either to demand, or to accept, indemnity for an act, which, he was conscious, merited the highest commendation. The house rejected, by a majority of seventy-seven votes, the only one of Sheridan's three motions that he ventured to submit to a division. It may indeed justly excite some astonishment, that any body of men should attempt to call into question, the rectitude and propriety of a measure, only applied at the last extremity, in order to rescue the capital from inevitable conflagration, and public credit from total subversion. But, never were the powers of government fallen into such debility, as towards the close of the American war. Nor ever did opposition venture to treat Pitt, or Addington, or Perceval, with the contumelious personality, which Fox and Burke used towards Lord North, on a variety of occasions.

That minister, though supported by a parliament newly elected, yet was by no means master of its deliberations. He retained, indeed, a majority, which might be esteemed considerable; but, it was nevertheless fluctuating, precarious, and destitute of confidence in their leader. The minority, on the contrary, who augmented, every month, in numbers and animation, considered the termination of the American war, as the term of the existence of the administration; and they already predicted, as well as anticipated with certainty, the ill success of Lord Cornwallis's expedition against the southern provinces. Notwithstanding, indeed, some faint gleams of hope and of success, which appeared in the spring of 1781; few, except the most sanguine, continued to expect the reduction of America to obedience, by the British arms. Emboldened by the disastrous state of foreign affairs, and availing themselves of the unpopularity of the ministry, the opposition attacked

in the severest terms, Lord North's financial measures. The loan which he had recently negotiated, having risen suddenly to a prodigious premium, became a subject of bitter invective, as profuse, improvident, and constituting a systematic engine of parliamentary corruption. And though it was maintained by a majority of more than fifty votes; yet the impression ultimately produced by opposition, both in, and out of the house, announced an approaching crisis, however it might still be suspended or protracted by a variety of events.

[7th-13th March.] During more than sixteen months that I sat in parliament under Lord North's administration, I recollect indeed no attack so personally painful and invidious made on him, as the enquiry instituted relative to the loan of twelve millions which he borrowed at this time. All the other charges or accusations brought forward, regarded the *minister*. The present discussion was levelled at the *individual*. Fox maintained, not only that the terms of the loan were in themselves culpably extravagant on the part of the first lord of the treasury; but, he roundly asserted, many times, while addressing the house, that some hundred thousand pounds, arising from the profit on the sum borrowed, were distributed in that assembly. It was by such corrupt means, he added, that a majority was obtained upon every question; and from such sources, that the recent expenses incurred by gentlemen at the late general election, were to be defrayed. George Byng, member for Middlesex, a man of very honorable character and upright intentions; but, of an ardent temper, very limited talents, and devoted to the Rockingham party; reiterated Fox's allegations in still more pointed language. "I believe, from my soul," exclaimed he, "that six hundred thousand pounds have been distributed among the members of this assembly;—I mean, to those who uniformly support all the ministerial measures!" Another leading individual on the opposition bench, Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, assured the house that he was credibly informed, Mr. Atkinson, a contractor well known beyond Temple Bar, partner in the commercial house of Muir, had received for

his own share, no less than three millions, three hundred thousand pounds of the loan. Hussey, member for Salisbury, who, though a dull debater, destitute of all the graces of elocution, tedious, and labouring under impediments of enunciation, yet thoroughly understood all financial questions, and never attempted to speak upon any other subjects; — Hussey, by a long, laboured calculation, endeavoured arithmetically to demonstrate, that the principles on which the bargain had been concluded, were radically vicious, as well as ruinous to the public. Sir George Savile, whose high character and large property secured him always a favourable hearing, called on the house not to sanction or to ratify so censurable a measure of finance. Burke, after repeating the vague assertions made by Fox and Byng, of the sums swallowed up among members of parliament, who, he said, were gorged with places, pensions, and pecuniary gratifications; proceeded to draw an eloquent comparison between Lord North and Necker. The former minister," continued he, "has in fact augmented the capital debt of the country at this time, by twenty-one millions of stock; while Mr. Necker has only added about five millions sterling, by his late loan to the public debt of France. The noble lord lays on new taxes to pay the interest of his loan. Not so the French financier. He contrives by reductions and economy, to find the interest, without imposing new burthens on the people. Necker borrows on lives. Our minister, on perpetuities. Louis the Sixteenth's superintendant of the finances, has, moreover, ten millions sterling in reserve for the exigencies of the approaching year. But, where are our resources for future years?" — Then abruptly interrupting the thread of his own comparison, "Oh! happy France," exclaimed he, "blest in her minister! Unfortunate England in her financier! The difference between the two countries, arises solely from the corruption of parliament." Mixing, nevertheless, as he usually did, raillery and humour with severity, he convulsed the house, and shook Lord North's sides with laughter, by comparing the thin, lean member of parliament, on his first coming

into the house, to the *Vulpercula*, or weazel of Æsop, who afterwards becomes so large and sleek, as to be unable to effect his retreat. Then stroking his own stomach, he contrasted it with Lord North's

"Fair round belly, with good capon lined,"

to the inexpressible entertainment of his audience, though perhaps it may be thought, at the expense of their senatorial character and dignity. Mr. Byng, who throughout this whole inquiry performed an active part, and by his indefatigable exertions to discover the real holders of the new loan, rendered himself not only conspicuous, but important, concluded a very impassioned and criminating speech, by making three motions. The first, that a list of all the subscribers to the new loan should be laid before the house. The second, for a correct list of all the individuals who had offered to subscribe, but were rejected. The last (of a nature probably without precedent in the journals of parliament), demanded copies of all the letters, notes, and other applications which had been addressed, not only to the first lord of the treasury, but to any of the lords commissioners of that board, to the secretaries, or to any other person by whom applications for part of the loan had been transmitted to Lord North. With these evidences before him, Mr. Byng undertook to prove the minister's guilt. In order to enforce compliance with so extraordinary a demand, he joined menaces that the people of England, worn out by oppression, would bear no more burthens; and that the day of retribution which impended, would infallibly take place sooner than was expected.

The first minister, thus assailed from so many quarters, and by such powerful opponents, did not on that account abandon himself. Calm, collected, conscious of his own rectitude, though surrounded by difficulties that accumulated from day to day, he made a masterly defence of the loan that he had just negotiated. While he admitted, and regretted, that the terms might have been more advantageous to the public, leaving still a moderate profit to the contractors, he denied that the slightest partiality

had been used in apportioning the sums respectively allotted to each bidder. He disproved the story of Atkinson's receiving so monstrous a portion of the loan; and justified the admission of members of parliament who were men of property, to become, like other opulent individuals, subscribers to it. In conclusion he made no objection to producing the list of subscribers demanded by opposition; but to the second and third motions he gave a decided negative. "The honorable member for Middlesex," said he, "after accusing me of partiality, makes rather a singular requisition; Deliver up to me the keys of your scrutoire. Allow me to empty all your drawers, to inspect your most secret papers, and to peruse every letter that I can find. When this is done, and I am become possessed of all the information that they furnish, then I will proceed to examine whether or not I can produce any charge against you.' So extraordinary a proposition I cannot doubt, will ever receive the sanction of this assembly." These arguments, however strong or convincing they may perhaps appear to us, after the lapse of near forty years, produced no impression on the minority of that day. From a variety of quarters Lord North was overwhelmed with reproaches, threats, and reclamations. Byng denied his right to withhold the keys of his bureau, which, as he asserted, belonged to the public—the first lord of the treasury being a great national accomptant. Fox loaded him with charges of corrupting parliament, while he withheld the only effectual means of proving his culpability, and demonstrating his guilt. On the members who supported so criminal a minister, Charles was, if possible, even more severe. "They begin," said he, "by taking the money out of the pockets of the people, in order to put it into their own; and they finish, by making bad loans for the public, to the end that they may arrange good terms for themselves."

When the list of subscribers to the loan was produced, though the greater number of the names of members of the house who were *holders of scrip*, still remained in concealment, their respective shares being ostensibly vested in other hands; yet many appeared in the

catalogue. Even two peers, one of whom was a lord of the bed-chamber and an earl, were down for 10,000*l.* each. But, no individual possessing a seat in the House of Commons, whose name was there registered, ventured to justify it on his legs in a manly manner, except Mr. Courtenay, who stood for the sum of 10,000*l.* George Byng having asserted in the course of his speech, that "those members of parliament who avowedly appeared on the list, were infinitely more honest and upright than the men who skulked in the dark;" Courtenay took notice of this observation. "As I have the honour, Mr. Speaker," said he, "to come from a country, where weak nerves and a false modesty are not characteristic maladies, my name stands conspicuous on the roll. And I can assure the honorable gentleman that the only concern I feel on the occasion, is on account of the small sum against which my name is placed." There were individual members of the lower house, not bankers by profession, who stood separately on the list, for 50,000*l.*; seven, for 70,000*l.* each; and one instance of 100,000*l.*

Mr. Thomas Townsend expended his patriotic rage on Atkinson, whom he termed a universal contractor, fit for every service; and who would probably soon be seated by the noble lord's side, on the treasury bench, among his firmest coadjutors. This circumstance did in fact take place to a certain degree, about three years afterwards, in 1784, when Pitt was become first minister, and Mr. Townsend (raised to the peerage, by the title of Lord Sydney), filled the post of secretary of state. Atkinson was then seen almost daily on the treasury bench. So little can politicians foresee the changes produced by time, ambition, and the mutability of human affairs!—After a stormy debate, protracted to a late hour, Byng's *second* motion was only negatived by a slender majority of *thirty-one* votes. On so precarious a basis did Lord North's power repose, even in the first session of a new parliament! The attendance was not, however, very numerous upon either side; opposition mustering only 106 on that night, while government found 137 supporters.

[14th—26th March.] The list of subscribers to the new loan having been laid on the table of the house, opposition, emboldened by their last division, made another desperate attack on the ministerial trenches; hoping that even if they could not carry them by storm, they might succeed in vilifying and degrading the first minister himself personally, in the estimation of parliament and of the country. It proved indeed one of the most humiliating and painful days to Lord North, that took place during the course of his long administration. Sir George Savile, selected for the occasion, though labouring under evident indisposition, and just risen from a sick bed, opened the discussion in the invidious character of an accuser. His speech concluded by a motion “to appoint a select committee for enquiring into the facts connected with the late loan, and to report on them to the house.” But, though the distinction of thus commencing the debate was delegated to Sir George, the task of proving his assertions, and embodying, as well as identifying his accusations, rested with Mr. Byng, who performed on that occasion the part of an inquisitor of state. Holding the list of subscribers in his hand, he undertook to demonstrate that the paper itself was altogether a piece of ministerial deception, calculated, under fictitious names, to conceal the members of both houses, who did not dare to avow the share respectively allotted to them in this most iniquitous loan. With considerable ability, prodigious labour, and minute investigation, he endeavoured to lay open to general view, and to expose to general condemnation, the secret machinery by which Robinson and Brummell moved the great state machine, denominated parliament; and the puppets, as he termed them, commonly called representatives. He even ventured to appeal across the house, to Mr. Henry Drummond, one of the most eminent bankers of that period, for the accuracy of the names of clerks employed in his service, who ostensibly held subscriptions to the amount of near four hundred and forty thousand pounds, in the loan. Drummond, who sat behind the first lord of the treasury, nodded assent, as Byng severally recapitulated them;

while Lord North, compelled to remain a passive witness and spectator of this disclosure before a crowded House of Commons, did not exhibit the dignified aspect or attitude befitting his high station. I never saw him apparently less at his ease; not even in the session of 1782, after the intelligence of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at York Town, or during the last days that he remained in office.

Not that he wanted defenders of consummate ability, who undertook to justify the transaction, at the head of whom must be placed the lord advocate. Aware that the occasion demanded all his talents, and ever ready to throw himself into the front ranks when the emergency called for it, Dundas seemed to collect all his powers on that day. Divested of those fastidious scruples to which men of more susceptible organization are liable, he boldly avowed or admitted the selection made by the first minister; which required, he said, no apology whatever, either to the house, or to the country. After pointing out the integrity and incorruptibility of his noble friend, as a fact universally conceded, he demanded, on what principle, members of either house of parliament were to be excluded from subscribing on the present occasion; or why, *cæteris paribus*, friends should not be preferred to enemies? The concealment of their names, he observed, proved only the weakness of their nerves, not the impropriety of the act itself. Referring to the established precedents of past periods of time, he maintained that such had been the invariable usage under all administrations; and concluded a bold, able, unembarrassed harangue, delivered in a tone and manner calculated to give it the fullest effect, by deprecating all interference of the house, as equally unwise, and pernicious in its operation. Fox rising as Dundas sat down, displayed on that evening, the vast extent of his talents, while he dissected with admirable perspicuity, the loan under discussion; which he endeavoured to demonstrate, was at once profuse, corrupt, and ruinous to the nation. He denied the insinuation (as it might be termed, rather than the assertion), of the lord advocate, in maintaining that former ministers had manifested a

similar partiality, or had negotiated loans on similar principles; making only one exception, namely, that of Lord Bute in 1762, which financial measure he loaded with the severest epithets. On Lord North he exhausted his invectives, as "a minister highly criminal for grossly deceiving, and fraudulently imposing on parliament; whose baseness in concealing the real terms on which he had just borrowed twelve millions could only be surpassed by his guilt in concluding them."

The first minister repelled these accusations with temper; explained every part of the proceedings which had attended his negotiation with the contractors for the loan; denied that either profusion or corruption could be attributed to him; and finally threw himself on the candour, good sense, and honour of the house, to maintain inviolate the bargain. Towards one o'clock in the morning, a division took place. The attendance was full, above 370 members being present; of which number, opposition had 163, while government was supported by 209. It was nevertheless a triumph dearly won, because the minority carried with them public opinion, which was generally adverse to the terms of the loan. Yet we have witnessed under Mr. Pitt's administration, during the course of the revolutionary war, in 1795, as well as in other years, loans, where the premium has risen to nine, and even to ten per cent., immediately after the conclusion of the bargain, without any imputations of improvidence or of corruption being thrown upon the first minister on that account. But, the misfortunes and the unpopularity of the American war had reached such a point in 1781, as to incapacitate Lord North from prosecuting it, without having recourse to expedients, from the necessity of adopting which Mr. Pitt was exempted. He carried the nation with him, when contending against Robespierre and Bonaparte. Lord North's only support lay in the crown. No prince indeed, of a less firm and tenacious character than George the Third, could have sustained him in office during the last four years that he occupied the post of first lord of the treasury, amidst accumulating diffi-

culties, humiliations, and disasters, from 1778 down to 1782. His predecessor yielded to far inferior symptoms of public dissatisfaction, and to far inferior national calamities, when, in 1757, he reluctantly called to his councils, a man distasteful to him, but forced into power by the universal voice of the country. If Fox had stood as high in general estimation as the first Mr. Pitt, he would have been carried into the closet on the shoulders of the people; but, his personal irregularities and excesses balanced his parliamentary talents, and prolonged Lord North's administration.

While the opposition endeavoured to degrade, if they could not overturn the first minister, by criminating his financial measures; two simultaneous efforts were made with a view to weaken his strength, and to diminish his numbers within the walls of the house. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, a man of unquestionable integrity but not endowed with superior parts, introduced a bill for the exclusion of contractors from sitting in parliament: while on the same day, Mr. Crewe, then representative for the county of Chester (since raised to the peerage by Fox, in 1806), moved the second reading of a bill, to restrain revenue officers from voting at elections of members to serve in that house. Both motions were negatived; but not by similar majorities. The first failed of success only by *twenty* votes, the numbers being 100, and 120, respectively, after a debate of considerable length: but, the attempt to deprive revenue officers of their elective franchise, was rejected by *forty-seven*, without giving risk to any long or animated discussion. Ministers divided 133 on the question; Mr. Crewe had only 86 votes. Sir Philip Clerke's blow was levelled at the *elected*. Mr. Crewe directed his aim at the *electors*. In the ensuing session, when the Marquis of Rockingham had attained to the head of the treasury, the two experiments were renewed with very different results.

I cannot too often repeat, while dwelling on this period of our history, that no virtues of the sovereign, however eminent, and no ability of administration, however recognised, could stem

the unpopularity of the American war. With the two exceptions of Johnson and of Gibbon, the former of whom defended in print, the measures of government, in the beginning of the contest; and the latter, after drawing up the manifesto issued against Spain in 1779, voted, as a member of the House of Commons, in support of Lord North, throughout the whole progress of hostilities; all the eminent or shining talents of the country, led on by Burke, were marshalled in support of the colonies. The aid of poetry alone seemed wanting to complete the delusion; or at least, the impression. Let us see how the admired author of the "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers," expresses himself on this subject. After describing, in verses of admirable beauty, the pretended corruption of the House of Commons under Lord North's administration, he declares that it will augment in enormity and profligacy,

"Till mock'd and jaded with the puppet play,
Old England's genius turns with scorn away;
Ascends his sacred bark, the sails unfurl'd,
And steers his state to the wide western world.
High on the helm majestic freedom stands,
In act of cold contempt she waves her hands:
Take, slaves, she cries, the realms that I disown,
Renounce your birth right, and destroy my throne!"

Who, on reading these lines, would not think them composed for James the Second and his Lord Chancellor Jefferies, rather than for George the Third and Lord North! Just at this time, the marriage of Lord Althorpe (the present Earl Spencer), with Miss Lavinia Bingham, took place; an event which I only mention incidentally, as it gave birth to one of the most beautiful lyric productions in the English language. Mr. Jones, better known afterwards as Sir William Jones, emulating at once the fame of Milton and of Gray, in "The Muse Recalled," reminded us of some of the most touching passages of "Lycidas," and of "The Bard." He, too, lent his powerful assistance to the cause of rebellion. Like *Goldsmith*, who, ten years earlier, erroneously assumed in his "Deserted Village," as the basis of his poem, that population and rural happi-

ness were abandoning England; Jones carried his assumption in our disfavour, to a still greater length. Juvenal, though he wrote under Domitian, only asserts that female modesty and justice withdrew from earth to heaven, after the extinction of Saturn's reign:

"Paulatim deinde ad superos Astræa recessit,
Hæc comite, atque duæ pariter fugere sorores."

But Jones, after lamenting that "freedom and concord repudiate the sons of Albion," carries off all the virtues from this degenerate island:

"Truth, justice, reason, valour, with them fly,
To seek a purer soil, a more congenial sky."

And to what country did they direct their flight? Impelled by the prejudice which then prevailed, and borne on the wings of poetic fiction, as well as of party violence, he transports these virtues to the Chesapeake and the Delaware:

"Beyond the vast Atlantic deep,
A dome by viewless genii shall be rais'd,
The walls of adamant, compact and steep,
The portals with sky-tinctured gems emblaz'd.

There on a lofty throne shall virtue stand:
To her the youth of *Delaware* shall kneel
And when her smiles rain plenty o'er the land,
Bow, tyrants, bow beneath th' avenging steel!"

Here, in a fine frenzy of inspiration, he seems to behold as in a vision, the modern *Washington*, and the Congress met, after successfully throwing off all subjection to Great Britain. George the Third is pretty clearly designated in the last line, apostrophizing tyrants. It was not, however, civil liberty, but independence on the mother country; it was not freedom, but emancipation from the parent stock, that America emulated to attain by arms. She might have been admitted to participate in the blessings of our free Constitution; but she must then have paid her pecuniary debts to British subjects, all which became liquidated in the crucible of insurrection. Burke, within ten years after the conclusion of the American war, found out his error, when he beheld the French revolution spring from

the ashes of Hancock and Adams. He then endeavoured, as he said, "to trim the boat at the other end." Mr. Fox never could discover any thing wrong, either in the one, or the other revolution. We have lived to behold the virtuous American government, within thirty years from the period of their emancipation, voluntarily become the accomplices and allies of the most sanguinary, flagitious, and obdurate tyrant, who ever appeared among men. We have seen this virtuous people yoke themselves to his car, when he was setting out for Moscow in 1812, in opposition to the united struggles of all Europe for deliverance; thus endeavouring, as far as their power extended, to cement by our destruction, his detestable empire. Madison, unlike Thrasylbulus or Brutus, only aspired to uphold and perpetuate the dominion of his Corsican master. It will demand ages to wipe out the stain of such national turpitude, from the American annals. But, under Lord North's administration, the insurgents beyond the Atlantic, were generally seen through the most partial and favourable medium: while Philip the Second, in his attempt to extinguish all the rights of human nature among his subjects in the Netherlands, was hardly stigmatized with severer epithets, than the opposition applied to the king of Great Britain.

The consideration of East India affairs, which formed one of the most important objects of the session, engrossed universal attention. As early as February, a *select* committee having been appointed, ostensibly for the exclusive purpose of reporting on the state and abuses of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, General Richard Smith was placed at their head, as chairman. His local knowledge of India, seemed to qualify him in some measure for the situation. He had acquired a large fortune, while in that part of the world; but, which he was supposed to have squandered since his return. Though destitute of the advantages of education, he did not by any means want parts; and he displayed some talent in addressing the house. But, as the committee allowed themselves to become subservient to the purposes of party, and par-

ticularly to be made the instrument of personal enmities or resentments, they soon degenerated into an engine of private attack, and of individual persecution.

The opposition, as if exhausted by the ineffectual and reiterated efforts made in the lower house of parliament, during the month of March, with the hope of overturning the administration, allowed the first minister to enjoy a degree of comparative repose throughout the whole of April. But, intelligence of Hyder Ally's invasion of the Carnatic, followed by the defeat of the British forces under Fletcher and Baillie, which reached London precisely about that time, spread universal consternation. In order fully to appreciate the extent of the calamity, and its operation on the public mind, we must recollect the state of the British empire, at the period under our review. The fabric seemed to be everywhere collapsing by its own weight, or yielding to external attack. In the western hemisphere, America might be considered as already lost. Many of the windward and leeward islands were reduced to the obedience of France; and the remainder, it was thought, must speedily fall. The possession of Jamaica itself appeared insecure. At home, the public funds experienced a progressive depression; while Ireland taking up arms, demanded political and commercial freedom, sword in hand. Cadiz and Brest had been crowded with our captured merchantmen, to whom the English navy no longer afforded its accustomed protection. Under these circumstances, the eyes and hopes of all men were turned towards the east, as the only quarter from which we might expect relief. But there, a combination of European and Asiatic enemies, aided by internal rebellion, and fomented by discord among the members of the supreme government, threatened the subversion of our power on the Ganges, no less than on the coast of Coromandel. Hastings quitting Calcutta, had repaired to Benares, in order to arrest the progress of Cheyt Sing's revolt. At Madras, the government of Rumbold was become odious for rapacity, and despicable from its incapacity or pusillanimity. Nor must it be forgotten, that we then neither possessed the Cape of Good Hope, nor Ceylon, nor Guzerat,

nor the island of Mauritius, nor Java, nor the Moluccas. Even the Carnatic belonged, not to us, but to our confederate, Mahomed Ally, the Nabob of Arcot. With the Mharatta empire we were at war. The rich countries of Mysore and of Bidnoor, occupying a central portion of the peninsula of Hindostan; extending through several degrees of latitude along the Malabar coast, and intersecting all communication by land, between the two presidencies of Madras and of Bombay, — these territories, so calculated to annoy us, were then subjected to a martial, enterprising, and active prince, animated by determined hostility to the English, assisted by French engineers, and himself habituated to the European system of tactics. His cavalry, bursting in through the defiles of the mountains of the Ghauts, overran the fertile plains of the Carnatic and of Tanjore, bearing down all resistance. Madras itself, invested by the enemy, was scarcely preserved from falling into Hyder's possession; and it must be confessed that the British dominions in Hindostan shook to their foundation.

[30th April.] Such was the impression produced by this unexpected event, which seemed imperatively to call for measures of energy, that it gave rise to the appointment of a *secret* committee by ballot, in the House of Commons, moved for by the first minister himself. The lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, being constituted their chairman, they were specially charged to inquire into the causes of the war existing in the Carnatic. Notwithstanding the severe animadversions levelled by the opposition, on the majority of the names chosen: several of the members were men of equal ability and integrity; whose luminous, as well as laborious reports, distinctly pointed out the origin, and indicated the remedy for those abuses, or acts of maladministration, which had produced such complicated distress on the coast of Coromandel. Nor did even the committee of scrutineers, appointed to examine the result of the ballot, escape some acrimonious remarks on its composition. Lord North formed one of its members, and I was likewise among the number. Mr. Thomas Townsend observed, when

speaking of it, immediately after their report to the house, that "the noble lord in the blue ribband was uncommonly vociferous in naming his own friends, and was, likewise, himself nominated a scrutineer; a circumstance very extraordinary, if not without parallel; the committee of scrutiny being, he believed, the first in the annals of parliament, that ever was honoured with a blue ribband upon it." Unquestionably, ministers felt great anxiety relative to the individuals who might be elected members of the secret committee, and were not without strong apprehensions that the opposition would succeed in forcing into it some of their most able or zealous adherents. Mr. Jenkinson, who stood forth on the list of persons chosen, was so impatient to learn the result of the scrutiny, that he wrote to me, while we were engaged in the examination, to request that I would transmit him the names, as soon as they were ascertained, and could be divulged. Dundas obtained as many votes as Jenkinson had, namely, 160. But *Gregory* was placed out of all competition, at the head of the committee; he uniting the suffrages of the ministerial, as well as of the opposition sides of the house, and being elected by 249 votes. *Gregory* deserved that mark of parliamentary preference, he being a very honorable, incorrupt, independent man; simple, or rather shy and repulsive in his manners, unadorned by any accomplishments of mind; but laborious, attentive to business, and possessing very extensive local information on East India concerns. He was one of the two representatives for the city of Rochester, and a member of the court of directors. Fox, in November, 1783, named him a commissioner for the government of India, in his famous *bill*. I believe, after the dissolution that took place in March, 1784, *Gregory* never again obtained a seat in the House of Commons.

Though strongly attached to Fox and to the party acting with him, *Gregory* disdained to be considered as a devoted partizan. I well remember, that about the very time now under discussion, in April, 1781, Burke having somewhat rashly pledged, not only his own support to a measure under contemplation, but

that of *Gregory* (whom he denominated "his worthy friend"); the latter rising with some warmth, desired the honorable member to limit his pledges to himself. "I stand," added he, "connected with no set of men, but will lend my support where I conceive it to be due, always delivering my opinion with freedom; being as independent in my seat, and in my principles, "as any individual within these walls. Burke, indignant at a reproof so unexpected and so mortifying, made a sharp, though a short reply; exclaiming that "if the honorable member thought proper to renounce any connexion with him, it gave him no concern." Mr. Orde, who has since filled many distinguished public situations, and been elevated to the peerage, stood ninth upon the list. To him, as I have always understood, was attributed to the *fifth* report from the committee of secrecy; one of the most able, well digested, and important documents ever laid upon the table of the House of Commons. With the reserve of *Gregory*, of Mr. Richard Jackson, who was a friend of the Earl of Shelburne, and of Mr. York, then member for the county of Cambridge, now Earl of Hardwick, whom even the opposition admitted to be an unexceptional person; all the remaining individuals composing the committee, were either men holding offices under government, or personally connected with the minister. Lord North, in the critical and perilous condition of the East India Company, unable to obtain from the proprietors, or from the court of directors, such advantageous pecuniary terms for the renewal of their charter, as he thought the nation was authorized to demand; had recourse to his ordinary palliative procrastination. He renewed the charter for a very limited period, only one year; and by that measure eventually originated the memorable *bill* of Fox, towards the close of 1783, which produced such national convulsions, terminated by the complete destruction of the "coalition ministry."

[8th May.] The attempts to drive Lord North from office, which had been in some measure relaxed or suspended throughout the month of April, were renewed with augmented pertinacity in

May. But, it was no longer against his measures of finance, that opposition pointed their blows. Sir George Savile, recovered from his late indisposition, re-appeared as the organ of the party, and endeavoured to induce the house to adopt anew the memorable resolution of the 6th of April, 1780, when it was declared that "the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." He no longer found however the same aptitude to receive those impressions of jealousy or apprehension, which had operated on the members of the late House of Commons; and after a very long debate, the motion made by Sir George, to refer the petition to a committee, was rejected by a majority of seventy-seven votes. The attendance nearly amounted to 350; government dividing 212, while the minority were 135. Neither Lord North, Lord George Germain, Dundas, nor Jenkinson, spoke during that evening. On the other side, Burke remained silent; nor did either Mr. Pitt or Sheridan take any part in it. Yet, a more important or interesting discussion I scarcely ever witnessed during the whole time that I remained in parliament; nor one, of which, if I were able, I should more anxiously wish to transmit some idea to future times. The dangerous doctrine of a right existing in the people, to form *associations*, to appoint *committees*, and to nominate *delegates*, for the protection of civil liberty against the encroachments or abuse of the royal power; a right, evidently independent of parliament, as well as subversive of it; — was fully discussed on that occasion. Lord Maitland, who then rose, I believe, for the second time, maintained that the right not only existed in the legal sense, and was strictly conformable to the British Constitution; but under certain circumstances might be highly expedient: adding, that to associations of men combined for a beneficial purpose, we were indebted for *Magna Charta*, for the revolution that expelled James the Second, and for the introduction of the reigning House of Brunswick. General Burgoyne, after declaring that he had, himself, signed the petition presented on that day, in the capacity of a delegate; and inveighing in language of uncommon aspe-

city, against the corruption, or rather, the prostitution of parliament at the feet of ministers; reverted to his own individual sufferings in the line of his profession. These, he detailed with great animation, asserting that "he was driven unjustly from a service in which he had grown old, by the machinations of power." He then subjoined, "I am now, from my time of life, sufficiently disposed to inactivity. Yet, should the exigencies of the people call me forth from my present obscurity, or if the necessities of the state should demand the assistance of my arm, I am ready either to act or to suffer in the public cause."

This declaration, which seemed more fitted to 1642 than to 1781; and which *Hampden* or *Pym*, when opposing themselves to the levy of ship money by prerogative, might have more appropriately made; was, if possible, outdone by Fox. In a speech of unreasonable length, but of great ability, he justified the right inherent in himself, and in every subject, to act as delegates, no less than as members of that assembly. "I avow myself," said he, "a delegate; and if I had not acted in a delegated capacity, I should not have applied to this house for redress. But, out of deference to the opinion of some persons with whom I act, and not from any doubt of its legality, I have not petitioned as a delegate." Then having panegyricized the constancy, incorruptibility, and perseverance of that patriotic band who stood forth in parliament, the champions of the British people; that impenetrable phalanx, who were neither to be terrified, misled, seduced, nor corrupted by ministers; he added, "I cannot better express myself on this point, than by adopting and repeating the words of my honourable friend (Burgoyne), namely, that as he had devoted his life and talents to the people, so I, whenever they call on me, shall be ready to execute their commands, as far as my acquiescence is authorised by the laws. I mean, whenever any direct and palpable inroad is made on those invaluable blessings secured to us by our happy Constitution." However guarded and qualified these expressions may appear, it is impossible not to consider them as revolutionary; and more suited to a tribune of the Roman republic,

or to an agitator of the times of Cromwell, than to a member for Westminster, the subject of George the Third. Such, indeed, they seemed to many members of the House of Commons, on the evening when they were used. Such, I believe, they were considered by Burke, who took no part in the debate, as he probably would have done, had he thoroughly approved the principles and object of the petition. Neither did Pitt rise to support Fox and Burgoyne; a circumstance much remarked at the time.

Ministers, though they did not, themselves, undertake their own defence but trusted to the discernment, loyalty, and good sense of the house, for rejecting the specious propositions of reform submitted to them; yet by no means wanted advocates to point out the insidious and dangerous spirit of discontent and insubordination, concealed under the declarations of Fox and Burgoyne. Sir Horace Mann protested his detestation of all associations and committees, as illegal in themselves, and calculated only for purposes of intimidation. While he professed himself an enemy to court influence, and a friend to economy; he reprobated the spirit of the petition, and exhorted the house to treat it with contempt. Courtenay employing, as he always did, the arms of ridicule, parodied the lines of *Pope* (when speaking of his Grotto), which he applied to the leaders of opposition, with admirable effect.

"Their wise divan, the best companions grace,
Chiefs out of war, and members out of place,
Who fondly mingle in their hope-fill'd bowl,
The feast of party, and the flow of soul,
Ev'n he whose lightning pierc'd rebellion's
lines,
For reformation forms their great designs."

The last couplet, which so pointedly alluded to Burgoyne's American campaign, contrasted with his present occupations as a delegate; was not less felt by the audience, than Courtenay's description of the Roman provocatives to patriotism, "*Domus, Inopia, Foris, Æs alienum*," attracted all eyes towards Fox. In language of the utmost simplicity, unaccompanied with any ornaments of style, but on that

account more impressive; Sir William Dolben, one of the representatives for the University of Oxford, a man of sound and sober sense, expressed his disapprobation of, and his total dissent from, the petition before the house. Of the asserted increase of the influence of the crown, so as to endanger the future security of public freedom, he declared his disbelief. Above all, he reprobated the appointment of associations and delegates for the purpose of overawing and controlling the legislature. He finished by observing, that so long as the Constitution existed, redress could only be obtained from parliament; and protested that he would oppose every institution, however plausible it might appear in theory, which tended to set up or to constitute any power, paramount to the laws and the British form of government.

So animated a declaration, made from a quarter of such respectability, proved of incalculable advantage to ministers, who thus beheld themselves defended by weapons far more solid than eloquence. It was indeed with a view to counteract the effect produced by Sir William Dolben's speech, that Fox instantly rose, and exerted his gigantic talents, in order to efface the impression. The solicitor general, Mansfield, replied to him; and alluding to the profession jointly made by Fox and Burgoyne, of their readiness to obey the call of the people whenever made, "This language," observed he, "either imports nothing, or it is strong indeed! It cannot mean a mere perseverance in parliamentary opposition. If therefore it has any meaning, it must be that they are ready, without previously deciding on the motives or the justice of the call, *to seek redress in some undefined manner*, not authorised by the Constitution. Both those honorable gentlemen are delegates, and both have signed the present petition as individuals. By such an anomalous mode of proceeding, while they affect to acknowledge the supremacy of this house, they in reality treat parliament as a subordinate power in the state, while they avow their readiness to obey the summons of the people without reservation." Neither Fox nor Burgoyne made any reply, nor

offered any explanation relative to the import of their expressions; but, Dunning rising when the solicitor general sat down, in a speech of considerable length, which displayed all the acute legal sophistry of a most able practitioner at the bar, endeavoured to cover his friends, and to justify their declarations. He assumed, as an incontrovertible principle, that associations might not only be legal, but laudable; the culpability or merit of such unions of individuals depending not on the act itself, and being altogether regulated by the intention. He exemplified the position with uncommon ingenuity, and placed it in numerous, as well as striking points of view; without nevertheless erasing the sentiment of condemnation which generally pervaded the minds of moderate and impartial men on a full consideration of the subject. The division sufficiently proved how little Fox could hope to overturn the administration, by the same arguments which had produced the memorable vote of the 6th of April, 1780; and he therefore directed his attack on a more assailable quarter;—I mean, the capture and treatment of the island of St. Eustatius.

[14th May.] That defenceless possession of the Dutch Commonwealth in the West Indies, having fallen into our hands, as a natural consequence of the war between the two states; Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan, the two commanders by sea and land, proceeded instantly to make a general and indiscriminate seizure of the property, as well as of the stores, there accumulated. In the execution of this act, many individual cases of severe suffering necessarily happened; all which were presented to the house by Burke, under a splendour of description, and a blaze of eloquence, which I have scarcely ever known exceeded even by *him*. He compared the conduct of our naval and military officers, in thus confiscating private property, to the most savage outrages of the ferocious leaders of the most barbarous ages; and after laying before his audience a picture of oppression on one hand, contrasted with misery on the other, well calculated to awaken sympathy, while it inspired indignation; he concluded by a motion

tending to institute an immediate inquiry into the whole transaction. Lord George Germain, in whose department the responsibility lay, and from whose office had issued the orders or instructions under which Rodney and Vaughan had acted; while he justified their line of conduct, as not only dictated by wisdom and policy, but as sanctioned by all the laws of modern war, and by the code of national jurisprudence universally adopted throughout Europe; yet strongly objected to a parliamentary inquiry in the first instance. Dundas, who always threw himself into the breach, whenever the enemy attempted to storm, distinguished himself on that night, by one of the most able speeches which ever fell from his lips. But the first lord of the treasury sat silent; a circumstance which gave rise to surmises, that the measure had not his cordial approbation, or that unanimity did not thoroughly pervade the cabinet.

Nevertheless, the division disappointed all the hopes of opposition; Burke's motion being negatived by nearly two to one; only 86 supporting it, while government had 160 votes. I have, notwithstanding, always considered the proceedings of Rodney and Vaughan at St. Eustatius, however necessitated they may have been by the peculiar circumstances accompanying the capture, as unfortunate, and to be lamented in a national point of view. Neither the vote of approbation in which I concurred on that night, nor my partiality for Lord George Germain, and for Lord Rodney, prevented me from owning that the measure has, on the fullest consideration, neither my moral, nor my political approval. It did not facilitate the subjection of America, as was hoped and predicted from the treasury bench. It covered our arms with some degree of obloquy, as if we had abused the rights of conquest, to purposes of rapine and private emolument. To the captors themselves, the plunder of St. Eustatius produced no benefit; the vessels on which was shipped the produce of that emporium, having been intercepted by a squadron of the enemy, under the command of La Motte Piquet, on their passage to England, and carried into French ports. Nor did the evil terminate there:

— for, I know that the actions and suits at law, which were carried on in the admiralty and other courts of this country, on the part of the individual who sought reparation for the injuries and losses inflicted by Rodney's orders, embittered the evening of his life, and pressed heavily on his finances. Such were the results of that expedition, from which very different consequences were confidently anticipated.

[31st May.] Notwithstanding the general admiration which Pitt's first speech had excited, and the great expectations formed of his parliamentary talents, yet he remained silent for more than three months, before he rose a second time: exhibiting by this act of restraint and self-command, the patience, as well as the judgment, with which he knew how to wait for a favourable occasion of presenting himself anew to public notice. Colonel Barré having attempted to induce the house to nominate commissioners of accounts, from among their own members, instead of delegating so important a function to individuals chosen, as he asserted, by the first minister; Lord North opposed it with his usual ability, and assigned many strong reasons for adhering to the persons already in employment. Pitt availed himself of this opportunity to confirm the impression that he had made, or rather to augment the reputation which he had previously acquired. With great animation, but with still greater dignity and energy, he endeavoured to demonstrate that the house, in permitting persons not taken from among themselves, to perform the office of examining and reporting on the national expenditure; voluntarily surrendered their characteristic, most valuable right, that of watching over the public purse. The power of taking from the people, the odious power of taxing, they reserved, as an instrument for enabling the noble lord in the blue ribband, to prosecute his wild schemes of conquest, or of corruption: but, the beneficent power of relieving the distresses of the subject, they abandoned to others. He treated with derision, the idea of those commissioners possessing more experience than the members of an assembly where every representative of the people should

be capable of superintending, as well as of examining, how the treasure of the state was extended.

After depicting with warmth the embarrassed and degraded condition of the country, he adverted to the qualities, the arithmetical talents, and personal qualifications of the commissioners. Sir Guy Carleton, he observed, though an able military officer, might be no accountant; and of Mr. Pigot he remarked, *that though of a profession to which he himself could not be supposed inimical* (for Pitt was then a barrister), yet the law did not necessarily qualify gentlemen for a commission of that nature. On Lord North he expressed himself with great asperity, as a minister who had repeatedly shifted his ground; who had violated his pledges given to parliament; had purposely employed the commissioners in objects of minor importance, instead of directing them to great national enquiries; and who only sought systematically to procrastinate, to deceive, or to mislead, as might best suit his purposes. He concluded by emphatically invoking and adjuring the house not to reject the motion of Colonel Barré, unless they were determined to bury their own freedom and independence in the same common grave with the power, the splendour, and the glory of the empire. Such was nearly, as I think, the purport of Pitt's second address to parliament; made in support of a member who represented, not the Marquis of Rockingham, but the Earl of Shelburne, in that assembly. It was pronounced before a thin attendance, scarcely above 140; and exceeded in duration his first speech, by nearly double the time. Not a word was uttered from the treasury bench in answer to it, nor was it supported either by Fox or Burke. A division taking place immediately after Pitt sat down, government divided 98, while the minority only amounted to 42. So firm a hold of power did Lord North still retain, towards the close of the sixth year since we had been engaged in hostilities with America!

[12th June.] Towards the middle of June, Fox, strenuously supported by Pitt, made an ineffectual effort for compelling the administration to abandon the further prosecution of the American war,

and to conclude peace with the colonies. Neither the house, nor the nation, though both were weary of the contest, could however be induced to relinquish it, while Lord Cornwallis seemed to be advancing with his army, through the central provinces, towards the Chesapeake. Fox's motion was rejected by a majority of seventy-three. On that evening nevertheless it began to be palpable, that the scaffolding on which rested Lord North's power, after more than six years of severe and almost unremitting attack, gave indications of an approaching fall. He in fact tacitly encouraged the assailants, by withdrawing from the breach, if I may so express myself, at the moment of the storm:—for, though the attempt to compel ministers to conclude peace with the American colonies, must, if it had been successful, probably overturned his own administration, yet he never rose, nor opposed it by a single word. Lord George Germain, under those discouraging circumstances, made as able and as eloquent a defence, as the nature of the case admitted: but he had to struggle against insuperable and augmenting difficulties. The country gentlemen, wearied out by so many unsuccessful campaigns, exhibited symptoms of reluctance to continue their support. One or two made their recantation. Rigby, and the lord advocate of Scotland, who both spoke in the course of the debate; though they resolutely opposed Fox's motion, yet avowed, not only that they were disgusted at so expensive and protracted a contest, but implied their disbelief of its termination on any terms short of conceding independence to America. One noble individual only, then an Irish Peer, was found sufficiently enthusiastic to avow that he considered the struggle as a *holy* war; a declaration which he made from the treasury bench. He was indeed, himself, a member of the board of treasury. The avowal attracted, as might have been foreseen, the severest animadversions from the opposite benches. Mr. Thomas Townsend, with very considerable ingenuity, drew a comparison between the actual war, and the crusades undertaken in the ages of darkness; which expeditions bore, he said, the strongest similitude. Both originated in folly, or

madness or delusion ; and both conducted to slaughter, or to ruin. Fox, holding in his hand the Gazette recently published by government, containing Lord Cornwallis's account of his victory just gained over the Americans, in the province of North Carolina ; endeavoured to deduce even from the British general's letter, proofs of the impossibility of his subjugating the colonies. Burgoyne, in a speech prepared for the occasion, detailed his own disastrous campaign through its principal stages, down to the surrender at Saratoga ; accused Lord George Germain of having deceived him with hopes or promises of aid on the part of the loyalists, which had never been realized ; and concluded by declaring that the loss of America might be regarded as inevitable.

But the feature of the debate, which rendered it peculiarly prominent and interesting in the annals of parliament, was the third appearance of Mr. Pitt on the floor of the house, and the part taken by him in the discussion. It would seem that he had not intended to rise, nor meditated to speak on the question under consideration, if the allusions made to his father had not in some measure compelled him to break silence. Mr. Rigby, in the course of his speech, having asserted that the late Earl of Chatham, though he denied the right of Great Britain to *tax* the colonies for the purpose of raising a revenue, yet maintained the right of the parent country to make *financial or commercial regulations*, and to establish *port duties or customs*, on every article sent to America ; Pitt attempted to justify and to explain that line of opinion, attributed to his noble relation. While he admitted that such sentiments had been expressed by the deceased earl, he denied that his father had ever approved of the war commenced with America ; which, on the contrary, he had condemned, reprobated, and opposed in every stage. Then, after thus throwing as it were a shield over the memory of his illustrious parent, and rescuing him from the imputation of having countenanced or supported coercive measures for the subjugation of the colonies beyond the Atlantic ; he diverged with equal vehemence and majesty of expression, to the topic immediately before the

assembly. Referring to the epithet of *holy*, which Lord Westcote had given to the contest, he declared that he considered it as unnatural, accursed, and unjust ; its traces marked with persecution and devastation ; depravity and turpitude constituting its essence, while its effects would be destructive in the extreme. The English language seemed inadequate fully to express his feelings of indignation and abhorrence, while stigmatizing the authors of so ruinous a system. As a specimen of parliamentary eloquence, it unquestionably excelled his two preceding speeches ; leaving on his audience a deep impression, or rather conviction, that he must eventually, and probably at no remote distance of time, occupy a high situation in the councils of the crown, as well as in the universal estimation of his countrymen.

Dundas, who rose as soon as Pitt sat down, seemed to be thoroughly penetrated with that truth ; and by a sort of political second sight, appeared to anticipate the period, when this new candidate for office would occupy the place on the treasury bench, then filled by his noble friend in the blue ribband. With consummate ability, but with equal address, in the progress of his reply to Mr. Pitt, the lord advocate endeavoured to prove that the late Earl of Chatham had uniformly resisted every pretension of America to independence. " If, therefore," said he, " the honorable gentleman supports the present motion for compelling his majesty's ministers to conclude peace with the insurgent colonies, he differs diametrically from his noble relation, whose last breath was exhausted in execrating those servants of the crown, that would presume to despoil parliament of its inalienable rights, and to rob the reigning family of their brightest patrimonial inheritance." I own that it has always appeared to me, such were in 1778 the sentiments of the great Earl of Chatham ; nor was I ever convinced, either by the explanations of his son, or by those of Fox, that he contemplated the independence of America with other eyes than those of Lord North and Lord George Germain. He might, indeed, had he survived down to 1781, have modified, changed, or retracted his opinions, in compliance with events :

but that he did so, previous to his dying speech in the House of Peers, notwithstanding the testimony of the late Mr. Pitt, I never could comprehend. Posterity may perhaps be better able to decide the point, than we can do in the present age.

The lord advocate admirably qualified whatever of unpalatable or distasteful to Mr. Pitt, might be found in his assertions relative to the Earl of Chatham, by the flattering predictions of his own future and certain elevation, with which they were accompanied. "He (Dundas), was unwilling and reluctant to state to the honorable gentleman's face, those truths, which, were he absent, truth itself would compel him to utter; but he nevertheless felicitated his country and his fellow citizens, on the auspicious union, and splendid exhibition of abilities, witnessed by the house on that evening. With the first rate talents, were blended high integrity, a noble and honest independence of mind, and the most persuasive eloquence." Such were the encomiums lavished on Pitt by Dundas; who, though he professed, and no doubt felt at that time, the strongest attachment to Lord North, yet obviously foresaw his decline, and as certainly beheld in prospect his destined successor; if not immediate, yet remote. In fact, the lord advocate of Scotland found himself, within the revolution of thirteen months from that day, seated, as treasurer of the navy, on the treasury bench, along side of Mr. Pitt, become chancellor of the exchequer, under the Earl of Shelburne's administration. So solid were his political speculations, so sound his judgment, and so speedily realised were his calculations of ambition! — Fox concluded this eventful evening, of which I have most imperfectly attempted to state some salient points, by replying to all the preceding speakers. Rigby, who had asserted roundly that every administration since 1763, concurred in maintaining as a principle, the unconditional dominion of this country over the American colonies; was admonished by Fox, "to observe a more temperate language when he advanced such positive charges, followed by such severe conclusions, against so many of the highest and most

respectable characters in Great Britain." He accompanied the reproof, by a declaration that "he was not ignorant how powerfully the paymaster of the forces was supported, *in that house, and out of it.*" Words pregnant with meaning, which alluded in a manner too intelligible for admitting of mistake, to the secret support that Rigby was supposed to derive from the royal confidence and favour! On the lord advocate, Fox was severe, yet liberal; and without the slightest mixture of gall, from which no individual in parliament was more perfectly exempt; not even Lord North or Sheridan. Fox jested on Dundas's protestations of independence on the first minister his friend; recognised the learned lord's abilities, nor disputed his integrity; but denied the accuracy of various statements that he had made in the course of his speech.

When Fox had occasion to notice Dundas's eulogiums on the Earl of Chatham, he seemed to pause and to weigh his expressions:—for, he felt that the ground was delicate and full of danger. "The learned lord," said he, "has eloquently panegyricised the exalted virtues and talents of a deceased consummate statesman. My youth and other causes prevented me from being much known personally to that great man. No individual in the house can, however, reverence his memory more than myself. Nevertheless I would lay in my claim for others, who, though they might not coincide in opinion on every point of policy with that illustrious nobleman, have yet rendered distinguished services to their country." In these words, dictated by filial piety, and affection for his father's memory, he indirectly alluded to the political and party disputes which had existed between Lord Holland and the Earl of Chatham, when both were commoners and members of that assembly. Disputes, which were destined to be revived with augmented virulence between their sons! — Reverting lastly to Lord Westcote's assertion, that he considered the contest with America as a *holy* war, Fox remarked, "To others, the application of such an epithet to the actual contest may appear new; but to me it has no novelty. I was in Paris, pre-

cisely at the time when the present war began, in 1776, and Dr. Franklin honoured me with his intimacy. I recollect, that conversing with him on the subject of the impending hostilities, he, while he predicted their ruinous consequences, compared their principle and their consequences, to those of the ancient *Crusades*. He foretold that we should expend our best blood and treasure in attempting an unattainable object; and that like the *holy* war of the dark ages, while we carried desolation and slaughter over America, we should finally depopulate, enfeeble, and impoverish Great Britain.

Fox's conclusion might almost be considered as prophetic. "The only objection," observed he, "made to my motion, is that it must lead to American independence. But I venture to assert, that *within six months of the present day*, ministers themselves will come forward to parliament, with some proposition of a similar nature. I know that such is their intention. I announce it to the house." Notwithstanding so eloquent, and so powerful an appeal to the passions, as well as to the understanding of his audience, the moment was not yet arrived, when the majority of the national representatives could consent to renounce all further hope of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience. Even the attendance on that night fell far beneath the vast and awful importance of the subject agitated. Only ninety-nine persons divided with Fox. One hundred and seventy-two supported administration. Two hundred and eighty-seven members were therefore absent. It seemed, however, to be more a question of the king, and of Lord George Germain, than of Lord North. There were not wanting individuals who thought that the first minister would have felt little regret, if opposition had out-numbered him. His conduct might be thought to indicate great indifference to the result, and he probably participated Fox's apprehensions for the final issue of Lord Cornwallis's Virginian campaign.

I have descended to more minute details respecting this debate, than I should have done, if it had not been the last which took place on American topics, previous to the catastrophe and surrender

of York Town. But the most interesting discussion of the whole session, and in many points of view, one of the most interesting which I ever witnessed in the House of Commons, took place three days later, on the motion for amending, or in fact virtually repealing, "the marriage act." It stood altogether unconnected with ministers, or with party politics, though originated by Fox, at a very advanced period of the year. The question seemed in itself to be not less philosophical and moral, than a measure of state, or an object of legislative policy. Never did Fox appear to me in a more elevated light, than on that occasion, while pleading the cause of his fellow subjects at large, against the shackles and impediments opposed, as he asserted, by aristocracy, family pride, and wealth, to the matrimonial union of two persons of dissimilar rank and condition! His father, Lord Holland, for whom he nourished the warmest filial affection, had manifested similar sentiments. Fox assumed as a principle, while reasoning on the subject, that "passion, not reason, is best capable of promoting our felicity in wedlock." However untenable and even revolting, such an assumption may appear, he maintained it by arguments well calculated to persuade, if not to convince his hearers. I will candidly own that they made the deepest impression on my mind, and produced the fullest conviction when I heard them from his lips in 1781; but, the lapse of six and thirty years have reconciled me to the marriage act. General Burgoyne, who supported the bill, and whose eloquence was usually tame, as well as destitute of entertainment, seemed to rise above himself, and to be inspired by the subject. Both he and Fox expressed themselves with the utmost acrimony against Sir Dudley Ryder, who had warmly supported "the marriage act" when it was first introduced into the House of Commons. They accused him of avowing a systematic intention to divide the higher classes of society from the vulgar, and to prevent their intermixture by marriage; thus effectually separating persons of high rank and fortune, from the mass of the population. Burgoyne, when alluding to Fox's splendid talents, observed that "if the *spirit of the marriage act*

had operated previous to his birth, he would never have come into existence." Courtenay, in a speech abounding with humour and irony, though of the broadest description, and which in many passages trampled on decorum, sustained Fox's arguments. So did Lord Nugent, in a somewhat similar strain of eloquence. On the other hand, Burke, with no less ability than Fox, and with equal powers of genius, appealed to many of the strongest passions of the human mind, while he opposed the measure brought forward by his friend. They completely diverged on this question, in opposite directions; each displaying uncommon capacity, enthusiasm, and profound reasoning, in their respective speeches. Sheridan likewise spoke against Fox's motion, with great ingenuity, though not at considerable length; and it was one of the few occasions on which I have seen them take different sides, during the whole time that I remained a member of the House of Commons. Lord North, as might be expected, inclined to oppose every innovation on the marriage act; and there could have been little doubt, as far as the temper of the house manifested itself, that Fox's bill would have been rejected by a great majority, if the sense of the members present had been taken upon it. But no division was demanded; and Fox, abandoning it for the present, pledged himself, if ever he should come into power, to renew the motion from the treasury bench. This pledge he never, indeed, redeemed: but if we reflect, for how short a time he continued in office, when secretary of state in 1782, as well as in 1783, together with the multiplicity of matter which then pressed upon him; we cannot wonder, though it is possible we may regret, his not having resumed the subject.

[16th—30th June.] The session now drew towards a close, and Lord North prepared to withdraw his shattered parliamentary forces from the scene of action. Not however before George Byng, the "muster master general" of opposition, as he was denominated, had invoked the followers of that party to attend betimes during the ensuing winter, "in order to terminate the wicked and fruitless contest with America." With so

much certainty did they calculate on complete success, whenever the campaign beyond the Atlantic should be concluded. Intelligence arriving about this time, of the naval action fought in Praya Bay, between Suffrein and Commodore Johnstone, Fox made some severe, but, as they have always appeared to me, just observations, on the conduct of the British commander. That he was surprised on the occasion, cannot admit of dispute; and though he extricated himself without sustaining any loss of ships, yet he acquired no more honour than Keppel had gained in his memorable battle with d'Orvilliers. I knew Johnstone, and respected him; but I coincided fully with Fox in opinion, that the commodore was much more formidable in parliament, than on the ocean; and more dreaded by the first minister of England, than by Maurepas or Vergennes. Lord North might have said of Johnstone, though in a different sense, what Sir Robert Walpole, his ministerial predecessor, observed in 1740, of the general officers of that period, when the list was submitted to his inspection. "I know not what effect they may produce upon the enemy; but, before God, they make *me* tremble." Johnstone's oratory, while opposing government, not his naval skill, called him forward, and placed him in command of a squadron, after he had come over to the side of administration. He acquired some wealth, but, gained little renown, by the expedition, which proved more beneficial to himself, than advantageous to his country. Lord North defended him nevertheless with animation, against Fox's comments.

The lord advocate of Scotland, as chairman of the *secret* committee, having laid on the table of the house, the two first reports made on the state of the Carnatic; strenuously recommended them to the diligent perusal of members during the approaching recess, "as they would constitute," he said, "the groundwork of future parliamentary proceedings." A few days later, a short, but sharp, and most personal altercation took place, — for I cannot call it by any other name; — between Fox and some leading supporters of administration. It was provoked by Fox, who, in the course of

a speech pronounced in behalf of the Americans confined in the Mill Prison at Plymouth, avowed that "On his opinion, their cause was the cause of freedom, of whigism, and of the Constitution, to which he ardently wished success;" adding, that "administration, in prosecuting the contest with the colonies, only desired to satiate their revenge." Irritated at such imputations, Dundas answered, "that it afforded him no surprise to find the honorable member rejoicing at our enemy's success; a success to which he had contributed not a little, by his language and line of action within those walls." But, Mansfield, the solicitor general, with a manly indignation, rising, demanded of Fox, "Whether he meant to limit himself to mere wishes and vows in favour of the Americans? Or did he intend to draw his sword, to clothe himself in the *rebel uniform*, to enlist under Washington's command, to fight the battles of America, and to point his weapon against his countrymen's breasts?" Fox answered, that he disdained to make any reply to calumnies founded in gross misrepresentation, and the conversation terminated. I have already remarked elsewhere, that he almost always wore *blue and buff*.

[20th—30th July.] Many circumstances contributed to sustain, and to prolong, the duration of Lord North's administration, notwithstanding the misfortunes and disgraces which continued annually to mark its progress. The mutiny in the Pennsylvania line, which for a moment seemed to menace the American Congress with internal revolt, during the spring of 1781; Lord Cornwallis's victory over Greene, at Guilford; followed by Lord Rawdon's advantage gained over the same general at Camden, two places situate in North and South Carolina; lastly, the expectations formed from the advance of the British forces into the province of Virginia:—all these events held the minds of men in suspense, till the prorogation of parliament on the 18th of July, allowed the minister to retire for some time, from the scene of his political exertion. The province of West Florida had nevertheless been conquered by *Spain*, while *France* reduced to its subjection the Island of Tobago. Our only acquisi-

tion consisted in the seizure, rather than the capture, of the Dutch Island of St. Eustatius in the West Indies; an event which served to cover Rodney and Vaughan, the naval and military commanders in chief, with obloquy, on account of their severe treatment of the inhabitants. Even on the element of the sea, every encounter which we had with the enemy, from its indecisive nature, rather tended to augment their courage, as well as to stimulate their enterprize.

[August.] The severest naval action which took place during the whole course of the American war, was the battle fought at this time between Parker and Zoutman, who commanded the English and Dutch squadrons in the North Sea, off the Dogger Bank. But, it bore no resemblance in its results, to the glorious victory obtained in our time, by Duncan, at Camperdown; and might more aptly be compared with the sanguinary, though indecisive conflicts for superiority, which distinguished Charles the Second's reign; when the navies of Holland were led by Tromp and Ruyter, while those of England were conducted by James, Duke of York, by Prince Rupert, and by Montague, first Earl of Sandwich. On this occasion, the king, departing from the ordinary course of his life, embarked on the Thames, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, who had just accomplished his nineteenth year; and descended the river to the Nore, where he visited Admiral Parker, on board his ship, the "*Fortitude*." Prince Frederic, the present Duke of York, then commonly denominated Bishop of Osnaburgh, had been sent over to Hanover, near eight months earlier; probably with a view not only to his accomplishment by visiting Germany, but, perhaps, to remove him from scenes here at home, ill calculated to ameliorate his political, or his moral character. One of the defects attributed to his majesty's natural formation of mind, principally resulting from his secluded education during his grandfather's reign, and the retired habits which he then imbibed under Lord Bute's tuition; was, his supposed reluctance to become personally acquainted with his people. His enemies described him as a prince averse to all communication with his subjects,

except at a levee. Thus the "Heroic Epistle" exclaims,

"Our sons some slave of greatness may behold,
Cast in the genuine Asiatic mould,
Who of three realms shall condescend to
know
No more than he can spy from Windsor's
brow."

Yet, when the king, emancipating himself for the first time since his accession to the throne, from the restraints which he imposed on his own conduct, went down to Portsmouth in June, 1773, to inspect his fleet; with what severe raillery did not the same poem endeavour to expose him to derision?

"There shall he see, as other folks have seen,
That ships have anchors, and that seas are
green;
Shall count the tackling trim, the streamers
fine,
With *Bradshaw* prattle, and with *Sandwich*
dine;
And then row back, amidst the cannon's roar,
As safe, as sage, as when he left the shore."

But, it would only argue folly to deny, that during the first twenty-three years of his reign, from 1761, as soon as Lord Bute came into power, down to the end of 1783, when Fox brought forward the "East India Bill," George the Third was most unpopular. His subjects, however, made him ample amends for so long withholding from him the testimonies of their affection, by the general and unbounded attachment which they have since manifested towards him, down to the moment when he ceased to sway the sceptre.

[September.] Admiral Darby, who continued to command the Channel fleet, had successfully relieved Gibraltar, during the course of the spring, when reduced to great extremity. But, in the autumn, our numerical inferiority compelled that commander to take refuge in Torbay; while the combined French and Spanish fleets, for the third time since the beginning of the war, occupied the entrance of the British channel, and even meditated to attack us, as we lay at anchor on our own coast. So low was the naval power of England reduced, towards the conclusion of Lord North's administration, amidst the exhausture and cala-

mities occasioned by the American war! But, towards America itself, all eyes were anxiously turned; where, it became evident, affairs rapidly tended to some great and decisive crisis. Lord Cornwallis having advanced into the province of Virginia in June, finally established himself at York Town in August. No position could have been more judiciously chosen; and it might unquestionably have been maintained under every disadvantage, against the united force of America and of France, if a chain of fortuitous accidents, rather than a series of able or well combined measures, had not led to the unavoidable catastrophe which terminated the war. De Grasse, who commanded the French fleet, was not less favoured by fortune, in finding the mouth of the Chesapeake unoccupied, on his arrival there from the West Indies; than he derived aid from the delays that prevented the English squadron under Graves, anticipating his seizure of that important station. Graves and Clinton, both, successively failed, only by the short interruption of a few days; the first, in occupying the Chesapeake with a naval force; the last, in arriving with an army, before Lord Cornwallis's surrender, and thereby rescuing him from the necessity of capitulating to Washington. In so desperate a situation, precluded from all possibility of relief, Lord Cornwallis laid down his arms; and the American rebellion, after a contest of more than six years, finally became a revolution.

[October.] It is at this point of time, that we must place the highest elevation to which Louis the Sixteenth attained during his reign: an elevation only to be paralleled in the French annals, by recurring to the brilliant æras of Louis the Fourteenth. For, his grandfather Louis the Fifteenth, never stood on such an eminence in the eyes of Europe; not even in the year 1748, previous to the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, though his troops, conducted by Marshal Saxe, after defeating the allies in various actions, had then overrun the Austrian low countries, and nearly reduced Brabant. In October, 1781, the King of France beheld America finally dis severed from Great Britain, by the union of his armies with those of the insurgents; while he received about the same period, Lord

Cornwallis's sword, surrendered to La Fayette. His forces were occupied in pursuing their career of victory throughout the West Indies; and in the east, Suffrein, in his repeated naval engagements with Sir Edward Hughes, not only maintained the honour of his sovereign's flag, but had nearly succeeded more than once, in obtaining a decided superiority over our squadron on the coast of Coromandel. The Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon, acting in subservience to the views of the court of Versailles, after subjecting Minorca and West Florida, held Gibraltar besieged by sea and land; the reduction of which fortress, calculated to render for ever illustrious the reign of Charles the Third, was anticipated with sanguine impatience by the two crowns. Our commerce had not suffered less by French depredations, than our colonies had been diminished by the arms of France. Holland, ranging her force under the same standard, made common cause with Louis, against her ancient ally. It only remained for them to crush the Channel fleet of England, in order to dictate the terms of peace; and so nearly did Guichen and Cordova, who commanded the combined navies of France and Spain, appear to be to achieving that last object, as to impress us with the utmost apprehension of its completion. Who, when contemplating a scene of such national prosperity; could have imagined that this descendant of so many kings, that had reigned for eight hundred years over the French, would perish on a scaffold, in his own capital, scarcely more than eleven years afterwards; the victim of his inert pusillanimity, or tame inaction, in not firmly resisting the first ebullitions of popular innovation!

As if to secure and perpetuate the Bourbon line, the Queen of France, who had been married more than ten years, without giving a male heir to the crown, at length brought into the world a son. Catherine of Medicis, like Maria Antonietta of Austria, had remained childless for nearly the same period of time, before she produced a successor. The young dauphin's baptism was performed in this very month, with extreme magnificence, at Versailles. Happily for himself, he expired early in June, 1789;

only a few weeks before the fatal revolution which took place in July of that same year, swept away the monarchy, to place Robespierre and Bonaparte successively on the throne of Henry the Fourth. The Dauphin was in his ninth year, when he finished his short career. I have been assured by individuals who had access to know the fact, that at the age of seven years, when the charge of his person, according to the established usage of the old French court, was surrendered up by the governess, and he was then put under the care of men; the dauphin being stripped in the presence of professional persons, and having undergone an examination, was pronounced to be without defect in his bodily formation. But, being made soon afterwards to sit with his feet in a wooden machine calculated to turn them out, the spinal marrow became speedily affected by it. Whether this assertion be accurate or not, it is certain that the vertebræ of the back-bone growing crooked, he fell into a state of languor, accompanied by debility. I have seen him more than once while in this condition, during the summer preceding his decease, taking the air in a carriage, in the gardens of St. Cloud. His emaciated appearance awakened concern; but, he was said not to want intelligence, and the queen his mother, whose maternal feelings were acute, manifested the warmest affection for him while living, as well as deep sorrow for his loss. The Duke of Normandy, his younger brother, born under a still more inauspicious planet, succeeded to his title; and became, after his father's execution, the unfortunate Louis the Seventeenth.

[November.] During the whole month of November, the concurring accounts which were transmitted to government enumerating Lord Cornwallis's embarrassments, and the positions taken by the enemy, augmented the anxiety of the cabinet. Lord George Germain in particular, conscious that on the prosperous or adverse termination of that expedition, must hinge the fate of the American contest, his own stay in office, as well as probably the duration of the ministry itself; felt, and even expressed to his friends, the strongest uneasiness on the subject. The meeting of par-

liament meanwhile stood fixed for the 27th of November. On Sunday, the 25th, about noon, official intelligence of the surrender of the British forces at York Town, arrived from Falmouth, at Lord George Germain's house in Pall-mall. Lord Walsingham, who previous to his father Sir William de Grey's elevation to the peerage, had been under secretary of state in that department; and who was selected to second the address in the House of Peers, on the subsequent Tuesday; happened to be there when the messenger brought the news. Without communicating it to any other person, Lord George, for the purpose of despatch, immediately got with him into a hackney-coach, and drove to Lord Stormont's residence in Portland-place. Having imparted to him the disastrous information, and taken him into the carriage, they instantly proceeded to the Chancellor's house in Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, whom they found at home: when, after a short consultation, they determined to lay it, themselves in person, before Lord North. He had not received any intimation of the event, when they arrived at his door, in Downing-street, between one and two o'clock. The first minister's firmness, and even his presence of mind, which had withstood the riots of June, 1780, gave way for a short time, under this awful disaster. I asked Lord George afterwards, how he took the communication, when made to him? "As he would have taken a ball in his breast," replied Lord George. For, he opened his arms, exclaimingly wildly, as he paced up and down the apartment during a few minutes, "Oh, God! it is all over!" Words which he repeated many times, under emotions of the deepest consternation and distress.

When the first agitation of their minds had subsided, the four ministers discussed the question, whether or not it might be expedient to prorogue parliament for a few days: but, as scarcely an interval of forty-eight hours remained before the appointed time of assembling; and as many members of both houses were already either arrived in London, or on the road; that proposition was abandoned. It became, however, indispensable to alter, and almost to model

anew the king's speech, which had been already drawn up, and completely prepared for delivery from the throne. This alteration was therefore made without delay: and at the same time, Lord George Germain, as secretary for the American department, sent off a despatch to his majesty, who was then at Kew, acquainting him with the melancholy termination of Lord Cornwallis's expedition. Some hours having elapsed, before these different, but necessary acts of business, could take place, the ministers separated, and Lord George Germain repaired to his office in Whitehall. There he found a confirmation of the intelligence, which arrived about two hours after the first communication; having been transmitted from Dover, to which place it was forwarded from Calais, with the French account of the same event.

I dined on that day, at Lord George's; and though the information, which had reached London in the course of the morning, from two different quarters, was of a nature not to admit of long concealment; yet it had not been communicated either to me, or to any individual of the company (as it might naturally have been, through the channel of common report), when I got to Pall-mall, between five and six o'clock. Lord Walsingham, who likewise dined there, was the only guest that had become acquainted with the fact. The party, nine in number, sat down to table. Lord George appeared serious, though he manifested no discomposure. Before the dinner was finished, one of his servants delivered him a letter, brought back by the messenger who had been despatched to the king. Lord George opened and perused it: then looking at Lord Walsingham, to whom he exclusively directed his observation, "The king writes," said he, "just as he always does, except that I observe he has omitted to mark the hour and the minute of his writing, with his usual precision." This remark, though calculated to awaken some interest, excited no comment; and while the ladies, Lord George's three daughters, remained in the room, we repressed our curiosity. But, they had no sooner withdrawn, than Lord George having acquainted us, that

from Paris, information had just arrived, of the old Count de Maurepas, first minister, lying at the point of death; "It would grieve me," said I, "to finish my career, however far advanced in years, were I first minister of France, before I had witnessed the termination of this great contest between England and America." "He has survived to see that event," replied Lord George, with some agitation. Utterly unsuspecting of the fact which had happened beyond the Atlantic, I conceived him to allude to the indecisive naval action, fought at the mouth of the Chesapeake, early in the preceding month of September, between Admiral Graves and Count de Grasse; an engagement which in its results might prove most injurious to Lord Cornwallis. Under this impression, "My meaning," said I, "is, that if I were the Count de Maurepas, I should wish to live long enough, to behold the final issue of the war in Virginia." "He has survived to witness it completely," answered Lord George: "The army has surrendered, and you may peruse the particulars of the capitulation, in that paper; taking at the same time one from his pocket, which he delivered into my hand, not without visible emotion. By his permission I read it aloud, while the company listened in profound silence. We then discussed its contents, as affecting the ministry, the country, and the war. It must be confessed that they were calculated to diffuse a gloom over the most convivial society, and that they opened a wide field for political speculation.

After perusing the account of Lord Cornwallis's surrender at York Town, it was impossible for all present, not to feel a lively curiosity to know how the king had received the intelligence; as well as how he had expressed himself in his note to Lord George Germain, on the first communication of so painful an event. He gratified our wish by reading it to us; observing at the same time, that it did the highest honour to his majesty's fortitude, firmness, and consistency of character. The words made an impression on my memory, which the lapse of more than thirty years has not erased; and I shall here commemorate its tenor, as serving to show how that

prince felt and wrote, under one of the most afflicting, as well as humiliating occurrences of his reign. The billet ran nearly to this effect: "I have received with sentiments of the deepest concern, the communication which Lord George Germain has made me, of the unfortunate result of the operations in Virginia. I particularly lament it, on account of the consequences connected with it, and the difficulties which it may produce in carrying on the public business, or in repairing such a misfortune. But, I trust that neither Lord George Germain, nor any member of the cabinet will suppose, that it makes the smallest alteration in those principles of my conduct, which have directed me in past time, and which will always continue to animate me under every event, in the prosecution of the present contest." Not a sentiment of despondency or of despair was to be found in the letter; the very handwriting of which, indicated composure of mind. Whatever opinion we may entertain relative to the practicability of reducing America to obedience by force of arms, at the end of 1781; we must admit, that no sovereign could manifest more calmness, dignity, or self-command, than George the Third displayed in this reply.

[27th and 28th November.] Severely as the general effect of the blow received in Virginia, was felt throughout the capital and the nation, yet no immediate symptoms of ministerial dissolution, or even of parliamentary defection, became visible in either house. All the animated invectives of Fox, aided by the contumelious irony of Burke, and sustained by the dignified reproaches of Pitt, then enlisted on the same side, made little apparent impression on their hearers; who, though they seemed stupified by the disastrous intelligence, yet manifested the firmest adherence to administration. Never, probably, at any period of our history, was more indignant language used by the opposition, not even in 1741, previous to Sir Robert Walpole's resignation! In the ardour of his feelings at the recent calamity which had taken place beyond the Atlantic, Fox not only accused ministers of being virtually in the pay of France; but menaced them with the vengeance of an undone people,

who would speedily compel them to expiate their crimes on the public scaffold. Dundas, who sat on the treasury bench, not far from Lord North and Lord George Germain, having ventured to smile somewhat contemptuously at the word *scaffold*; Fox apostrophized him in angry terms, demanding if the learned lord did not think that the time was yet ripe for punishment? Burke repeated the same denunciations. Speaking of the condition of the country, he declared it to be extinct. "The British nation," said he, "as an animal, is dead; but the vermin that feed on the carcase, are still alive. A day of reckoning will however arrive. Whenever it comes, I shall be ready to impeach, and signally to punish the authors of these calamities."

Though Fox, in conformity with the wishes of his friends, moved on that evening, an amendment to the proposed address to the throne; yet he said, that his own opinion decidedly went to send up no address whatever to the sovereign, until the members of the lower house could consult their constituents, and receive their instructions. The idea was strongly enforced by Mr. Thomas Pitt, who not only recommended an immediate appeal to the constituent body of electors throughout the kingdom; but, exhorted the assembly to withhold all supply, till that measure was carried into execution. Colonel Barré joined in the recommendations for calling together their constituents, and demanding their advice, in a moment of such danger and public distress. So did Mr. Duncombe, one of the two members for the county of York. But Burke, however violent and declamatory he might be on other points, never made the slightest allusion to revolutionary remedies, or proposed any such experiments. Fox's appeal to the electors of Westminster, convoked in Westminster Hall, or in Palace Yard, might indeed have been made without incurring ridicule. But, how Mr. Thomas Pitt, who elected himself for *Old Sarum*; or Barré, whom Lord Shelburne returned for *Calne*; were to take the sense of *their* constituents, it was not easy to explain. Such however were the propositions gravely made in the legislative assembly of Great Britain, towards the close of the Ameri-

can war, amidst the universal dejection or despondency of that calamitous period! Rigby, and he only, of all the ministerial or royal supporters in parliament, ventured to elevate his voice against the doctrines inculcated by Fox. "What! Mr. Speaker," demanded he, "is the general sense of the nation no longer to be collected within these walls! Such unconstitutional and illegal appeals to the people, can lead only to disaster, tumult, and outrage. The representative body is alone competent to pronounce the public sentiment." Unintimidated by Sheridan, who attacked him for speaking with contempt of the constituent part of the community, Rigby maintained his position with great firmness.

Burke with inconceivable warmth of colouring, depicted the folly and impracticability of taxing America by force, or as he described it, "shearing the wolf." The metaphor was wonderfully appropriate, and scarcely admitted of denial. He was sustained, and I had almost said, outdone by Mr. Thomas Pitt; who, in terms of gloomy despondency, not unaccompanied with great eloquence, seemed to regard the situation of the country, as scarcely admitting of a remedy, under such a parliament, such an administration, and such a sovereign. "The ministers," exclaimed Burke, "assert that we have a right to tax America. But have we the power to enforce the right? They cry with *Shylock*, America, give us our bond! The pound of flesh is ours, and we will have it next your heart! Oh! miserable and infatuated men! Oh! undone country!" — He then burst into that most striking and picturesque simile of *the wolf*. "Oh! says a silly man, elated with his dominion over a few beasts of the forest, there is excellent wool to be found on a wolf's back, and I am resolved to shear him. What! shear a wolf! Yes. But will he submit to the operation? Can you get at this wool? Oh! I have neither considered, nor will I consider, whether it be practicable. It is my right. A wolf has wool. All animals having wool, may be shorn, and therefore I will shear the wolf?" I confess, I thought this apologue, if I may so term it, one of the most impressive

and convincing that I ever heard pronounced, during the whole time that I remained in the House of Commons. Such it was felt to be on that evening, throughout the ministerial ranks. Mr. Thomas Pitt, though a man of very superior attainments of mind, and possessing no ordinary powers of oratory, rose seldom to address parliament. But whenever he spoke, his name, and his consanguinity to the great Earl of Chatham, who was his uncle, procured him a most favourable audience. Despair animated, while it deeply tinged, his speech. Considering the country as already lost, he said, "It no longer was a matter of importance, what set of state puppets worked the dismal scene! While the fatal *system* remained, and the *deadly secret influence* which had continued throughout the present reign, pervaded every measure and every department, it signified little what ostensible agents were placed at the head of affairs."

Lord North, in this moment of general depression, found resources in himself. He scornfully repelled the insinuations of Fox (who had called him the prime minister of France); as deserving only contempt; justified the principle of the war, which did not originate in a despotic wish to tyrannize America, but from the desire of maintaining the constitutional authority of parliament over the colonies; deplored in common with the opposition, the misfortunes which had marked the progress of the contest; defied the threats of punishment; and finally adjured the house not to aggravate the present calamity by dejection or despair, but by united exertion, to secure our national extrication. "The war with America, I admit," said he, "has been unfortunate; but not unjust. And should I hereafter, as I am menaced, mount the scaffold in consequence of the part that I have performed in its prosecution, I shall continue to maintain that it was founded in right, and dictated by necessity." Lord George Germain was not silent on that night. He deplored the fate of Lord Cornwallis, avowed the active share that he had taken in endeavouring to subjugate the colonies, declared his readiness to quit the office which he filled,

whenever his resignation should be demanded; but added, "I will neither be brow-beat, nor clamoured out of it. Whenever my sovereign calls for my situation, I shall resign it into his hands."

The debate which arose on the subsequent evening, when the address to be presented to the throne was reported to the house, far exceeded in the importance of the matter elicited, the first discussion. Pitt, who reserved himself for this second agitation of the American question, rose early; and in a speech of extraordinary energy (throughout the course of which he contrived with great ability, to blend professions of devoted attachment to the person of the king, with the severest accusations of his ministers); he fully confirmed the high opinion of his judgment and parliamentary talents, already entertained throughout the country. But, though Pitt spared the reigning prince, whom he depicted as under a delusion, he did not the less bitterly inveigh against the "baleful influence of the crown," which, he said, had produced the contest with America. That ruinous war constituted "the pillar, constructed on the ruins of our Constitution," by which, as he asserted, the first lord of the treasury held his situation. He concluded by calling on ministers to state without circumlocution or deception, what were their intentions as to the further prosecution of the American war, and to give some general idea of the manner in which it was henceforward to be pursued. A sort of pause took place on his sitting down; while the eyes of all present were directed towards the treasury bench, in the expectation that either the chancellor of the exchequer, or the secretary for the colonial department, would stand up, and make some reply to these most pointed, as well as interesting questions. But both sate silent, though from different motives. In so critical a moment, when the house seemed to demand an explanation on the point, the lord advocate of Scotland presented himself boldly to public notice. After denying in the most precise and explicit terms, that the address proposed, either pledged the assembly to continue the war against the colonies, or could be so

interpreted; he proceeded to put hypothetically a case, which might be said to withdraw in some measure the curtain of state from before the cabinet, and to expose the disunion that existed among its members. "If," said Dundas, "any minister, accused of mal-administration, should set up as his excuse or his defence, that he was over-ruled in the cabinet, and compelled by the majority to act upon opinions contrary to his own private judgment, such an apology cannot be admitted in this house. A minister, who, in order to preserve his place, would submit to carry into execution, measures that he had condemned, must not only be unworthy of his situation; but, would thereby betray his trust, and merit the execration of his countrymen."

This avowal, though qualified by assurances that it was altogether general, and had not the slightest allusion to, or the most indirect authority from, the first lord of the treasury; yet disclosed the secret already suspected or understood by the opposition. Fox felicitated Pitt, whom he denominated *his honorable friend*, on having, by the effect of his powerful oratory, extracted from an individual so nearly connected with administration, the declaration that the address did not pledge parliament to continue the war against America. But Burke, in the progress of a speech, less marked by those emanations of genius which generally illuminated all that he uttered, than distinguished by its intemperate violence, endeavoured to prove that the proposed address *did* bind the house to prosecute offensive hostilities with France and America. He declared the address itself to be a compound of hypocrisy, and of infamous, abandoned falsity. Nor did he fail to paint in the warmest colours of a distempered imagination, the punishments which, he asserted, would be inflicted on the unhappy loyalists, deserted by us, and left under Lord Cornwallis's capitulation, to the mercy of the Congress. Their slaughtered remains, he said, would be exposed on all the headlands. Notwithstanding these combined efforts, which were sustained by Keppel and by Mr. Thomas Townsend, the minister divided on both evenings, in a large majority;

the address being carried by 89, in a full house where 347 members were present. Only 185 attended the *report*, of which number, 131 supported administration, while the minority did not exceed 54.

Nevertheless, the contest with America might be considered as virtually arrested, though not ostensibly terminated. More than one member, known to be ardently attached to the crown, as well as to the existing government, declared his disapprobation of any further attempt to carry on military operations beyond the Atlantic. Lord Nugent said, it would now be politic to acknowledge the independence of the colonies. Courtenay, though holding a place under the master general of the ordnance, not only avowed that he never had considered the war against America, as expedient, politic, or wise; but added, that he only voted for the address, on the assurances given by persons in office, that it did not pledge to the prosecution of hostilities for the purpose of subjugating America. Lord North himself, two days afterwards, explicitly stated, when addressing the house, that they were not bound by their two recent votes, to carry on either the American, or any other war; simply to provide for the necessary expenses of the government. But, though the continuance of *offensive* hostilities in America, was thus unequivocally renounced by the first minister, and virtually or silently acquiesced in by Lord George Germain; yet, so far did they seem from professing a readiness to acknowledge the *independence* of the thirteen colonies, that they warmly maintained the wisdom and the necessity of still prosecuting a *defensive* war in that portion of the globe. In the House of Peers, a still greater proportionate majority supported administration. When Fox, presuming on the operation of the recent misfortune in the Chesapeake, soon afterwards attempted to stop the progress of the supplies, in which effort he was warmly supported by Mr. Thomas Pitt, the opposition experienced a second defeat; only seventy-seven persons voting with them, while Lord North had one hundred and seventy-two. It seemed indeed by no means clear, during the first fortnight after parliament

met, whether any official change whatever would take place ; or if an alteration should be made in the cabinet, to what extent it would be carried. The national forces, exhausted by so long a contest, and now opposed in every quarter by a vast confederacy, were indeed evidently unequal to continue the effort for subjecting America ; and it therefore became obvious, that new measures must speedily supersede those which had been prosecuted during so many years. But, the same *first minister* might remain in power, under a total, or a partial change of system ; and in that case, all the labours of the minority would be frustrated, in the moment of their expected completion. The king's firmness and tenacity were well understood by all parties. Lord North showed hitherto no disposition to resign, and parliament had given no indications of having withdrawn their confidence from the administration. Such appeared to be the aspect of public affairs, in the first week of December.

[1st — 10th December.] Though Fox and Pitt seemed at this time to act in perfect political union, yet no man who attentively considered the different spirit which animated their speeches, whenever the sovereign became indirectly the subject of their animadversion, could fail to remark their widely dissimilar line of conduct. Fox, whether he was impelled by his consciousness that the king's moral repugnance to many parts of his private character, and to the irregularities of his life, imposed insurmountable obstacles to his ever attaining the royal favour ; or whether, having already offended in his political capacity, beyond the hope of pardon, he relied solely on his own talents, aided by party to force his way into the cabinet, and to maintain himself in that situation ; — which ever of these motives principally actuated him, it is indisputable that in all his allusions to the king, although he might affect to shelter himself under the forms of parliamentary language, yet Fox always chose to consider him as animated by passions and sentiments unbecoming his station, as well as incompatible with the benignity which constitutes the most enviable attribute of royalty. Fox designated or characterized

him in fact, as under the dominion of resentment ; unfeeling, implacable, and only satiated by the continuance of war against his former subjects. In a word, like James the Second, rather than William the Third : more as a tyrant and an oppressor, than as the head of a free country, the guardian of a limited constitution.

On the first day of the session, when an address to the crown was proposed by the honorable Mr. Charles George Perceval, now Lord Arden ; “ Those,” said Fox, “ who are ignorant of the character of the prince whose speech we have just heard, might be induced to consider him as an unfeeling despot, exulting in the horrid sacrifice of the liberty and the lives of his people. The speech itself, divested of the disguise of royal forms, can only mean, ‘ Our losses in America have been most calamitous. The blood of my subjects has flowed in copious streams, through every part of that continent. The treasures of Great Britain have been wantonly lavished ; while the load of taxes imposed on an overburthened country, is become intolerable. Yet will I continue to tax you to the last shilling. When, by Lord Cornwallis's surrender, all hopes of victory are forever extinct, and a further continuance of hostilities can only accelerate the ruin of the British empire, I prohibit you from thinking of peace. My rage for conquest is unquenched, and my revenge unsated : nor can any thing except the total subjugation of my revolted American subjects, allay my animosity.’ ” When we consider the severity and acrimony of these personal imputations, we cannot wonder that they excited corresponding sensation of resentment in the royal bosom. What accusations more wounding could we frame, what motives of action more atrocious could we suppose, and what language more abhorrent to our feelings, could we have attributed to that monster, whose crimes so long desolated France and Europe, than are here supposed to animate George the Third ! It must be admitted even by his greatest admirers, that Fox, however eminent were his talents, yet by the want of moderation and judgment, sentenced himself during his whole life, to perpetual exclusion from office ;

verifying in his own person, Juvenal's remark upon the injuries attendant on eloquence, when he says,

"Torrens dicendi Copia multis,
Et sua mortifera est Facundia."

Pitt, on the contrary, even when he appeared to be most animated by sentiments of indignation against the measures, or the ministers; yet repressed any intemperate expressions, and personally spared the sovereign. He pronounced indeed in the most unqualified terms, his abhorrence of the further prosecution of the American war; and on one occasion I recollect his solemnly invoking the Divine vengeance on the heads of the administration, who had reduced the empire to such a state of ruin and degradation. But, with consummate ability, he separated the king from his weak or evil counsellors; admitted the purity of intention by which he was ever impelled; professed his ardent attachment to the person, as well as to the family, of the reigning monarch; and declared that it would be best manifested, by exposing the delusion that had been practised on him. The lord advocate of Scotland, whose distinguishing political tact, and keen discernment in all matters where his own interest or ambition were concerned, enabled him to decry a minister in embryo: appears early to have been impressed with a conviction of this characteristic difference between the two opposition leaders. While he continued strenuously to support an administration, the certain approaching fall of which, he nevertheless probably anticipated; he lavished the warmest encomiums from the treasury bench, on the hereditary talents, the brilliant oratory, and early indications of genius, in Pitt; under whose protection, aided by his own parliamentary powers, he speedily contrived, after Lord North's resignation, to reappear on the ministerial theatre.

Notwithstanding the ostensible degree of harmony and concert which seemed to animate ministers in the House of Commons, during the first days of the session: yet before the middle of December it began to be apparent, that some essential disunion of sentiment prevailed

among the members of administration. Lord North in fact *might* continue, as many persons imagined, first minister, after the avowal of American independence. But, Lord George Germain *could not* by any possibility remain in office a single day after such a recognition. At this breach the opposition poured in, and were aided by some of the adherents of government, who conceived that by separating the two ministers, and dismissing the latter, Lord North could yet be preserved at the head of his majesty's councils. Sir James Lowther having introduced a motion on the 12th of December, tending to declare that "All further attempts to reduce the Americans to obedience by force, would be ineffectual; and contrary to the true interests of the kingdom;" after a long and very animated debate, the *order of the day* could only be carried by a majority of forty-one, in a crowded house, where four hundred members were present. Some of the circumstances attending that discussion, were in themselves so interesting, as to lay peculiar claim to commemoration. Neither the personal character, the talents, nor the eloquence of the member for Cumberland, who originated the question, could powerfully recommend it to attention. But, it was far otherwise with the individual who seconded it. Sir James Lowther's prodigious property, and that only, gave weight to his exertions. Mr. Powis, who represented the county of Northampton, combined very considerable parliamentary ability, with a most independent and upright mind.

Never can I forget the effect produced by his citation from Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," as applicable to the calamitous position of Great Britain? With consummate judgment he selected some passages of the celebrated historian in question, extracted from the reigns of Honorius and of Valentinian the Third, which seemed almost prophetically to depicture or to describe the events of the hour, under George the Third. The incapacity of the government, the contempt into which it had fallen with foreign states, the rapid increase of taxation, the corruption of the senate,

the expenditure of treasure, the loss of provinces, and the pertinacity of the sovereign in continuing a hopeless contest with his revolted subjects;—all these facts, so apposite in themselves, were quoted, or rather were read by Powis in his place, and constituted a part of his speech. Their operation was perfectly theatrical. A pin might have been heard to drop, such was the silence, while he pronounced it; and it seemed to spread a sort of dejection over the ministerial side of the assembly. Gibbon himself, who unconsciously furnished these weapons against his friend the first minister, and who was at the very time a member of the board of trade; was personally present in the house. He had ceased at the last general election, to represent a Cornish borough, Leskeard, for which he was chosen in 1775, and now sate for Lymington. Lord North was so sensible of the injury resulting from Powis's appeal to the passions of the house, sustained by the artillery which he had borrowed from Gibbon, that he rose immediately, in order to efface the impression. In the course of a laboured, able, and well considered address, he endeavoured to demonstrate that the motion, if carried, would incapacitate and cripple the administration; which, if precluded, or prohibited from carrying on any military operation on the American continent, could not successfully combat our foreign enemies in that quarter of the globe. But he at the same time declared his opinion, that no further hostilities ought to be persisted in, for the reduction of the colonies, by sending troops into the interior of the country. The weakness of government, and their apprehensions of the defection which might manifest itself among their adherents, were sufficiently displayed by Lord North, in only moving the *order of the day*, instead of giving a direct negative to Sir James Lowther's proposition.

Burgoyne was not merely animated, but personal, as well as pointed, in his animadversions on Lord George Germain; and even by unavoidable implication on the sovereign himself, whom he clearly designated in terms too plain to admit of mistake. After examining,

as a soldier and a tactician, the plan proposed by ministers, for retaining posts in America, and prosecuting a species of defensive warfare, he subjoined, "These observations may be called military remarks; but let the house remember, that they are addressed to a military secretary of state. The country has not forgotten that he *was* a soldier, the country feels that he *is* a counsellor." Having expressed his apprehensions for the impending fate of Gibraltar, invested by the forces of France and Spain, he made a recantation of his error in ever approving or aiding the attempt to subjugate the colonies, adding, "I am now convinced, on a full consideration of the measures pursued by ministers, as time has developed their system, that the American war constitutes only a part of a general plan levelled against the Constitution of Great Britain, and against the universal rights of mankind." Dundas having professed that Lord North's declaration relative to future hostilities beyond the Atlantic, had fully satisfied his mind; protested, that had not the chancellor of the exchequer thus unequivocally renounced all further attempt to reduce the colonies by offensive operations, he must have voted on the side of opposition. But Burke, with great powers of wit, treated the lord advocate's assurances as a subject of derision. "An American war," exclaimed Burke, "you must still have; but as parliament has at length become dissatisfied with the manner in which it was carried on, we will change the plan, say ministers. An American war you must still have. We will give you your diet differently dressed; but it shall nevertheless be the American war. "Having squandered seventy millions in one way, we will now expend seventy millions more in another way." Fox, as well as Barré, exposed with equal force, the fallacious, or loose and unsatisfactory protestations of the first minister. Lord George Germain at length rose; and the house, anxious to hear his sentiments, though the evening was then very far advanced, lent him an attentive ear. As this speech may be deemed the last that he pronounced in his own defence, while secretary for the colonies; and as I lis-

tened to it with more than ordinary interest, I shall commemorate some passages of it.

He began by professing his coincidence of opinion with Lord North, as to changing prospectively the mode of carrying on the war; a sentiment, in which, he added, *all* the king's confidential servants were united: but he contended, that though circumstances justified and dictated such an alteration of system, he could not concur in evacuating New York, Charles Town, and the other invaluable possessions on the American coast, still retained by Great Britain. "If," continued he, "the house should adopt the motion proposed, I will instantly retire, as I consider it to include a resolution of altogether abandoning the American war; and let the consequence be what it may, I never will put my hand to any instrument conceding independence to the colonies. My opinion is that the British empire must be ruined, and that we never can continue to exist as a great, or as a powerful nation, after we have lost or renounced the sovereignty over America. By this opinion I will abide, because I am resolved to leave the people their country." George Byng having, somewhat indecorously, and certainly in a manner unauthorized by the forms of debate, said across the house, "You will not leave us any country;" Lord George, irritated, instantly with considerable emotion, exclaimed, "if the honorable gentleman believes himself warranted in impeaching me, let him do it! But, let him do it in the way warranted by the Constitution. Let him not convoke the people without doors, and address *them* to change the administration! It is the province of this house, with the dignity becoming its character, to adopt a constitutional measure. Let the house address the throne, if they think proper. If ministers have merited it, let them be dismissed, impeached, and brought to punishment. But, do not, from party violence, injure the Constitution, and risk the subversion of the country." These were nearly his words, at the conclusion of which he sat down. Mr. Byng, far from excusing the interruption, justified it. "The noble secretary," said he, "calls on me to impeach him. Let him

only turn his eyes on those persons who surround him, and he will perceive the reason that he is not impeached. He will see a phalanx of hired supporters, ready to protect him, or any other minister, against the effects of the American war. Give us only an honest parliament, and we should then see if security and impunity would result from impeachment." No notice was taken of these severe imputations thrown upon the house, and the debate soon afterwards closed. But it became apparent how weak were the foundations on which Lord North's power rested, when the defection of so inconsiderable a number of individuals as *twenty*, going over from the ministerial ranks, to the opposition side, would have laid him at the mercy of his enemies. And under the deplorable circumstances of the war, of the finances, and of the country, there existed little hope of a counter desertion back to the party of government. Already the minority anticipated with a sort of certainty, the approaching, if not the imminent fall of administration.

[14th December.] Nor was the paucity of numbers, the only symptom that announced a ministerial crisis. Two days subsequent to the late division, when the secretary at war laid before the committee of supply, the estimates of the army; another discussion of the American question took place, more decisive, if possible, than any which had yet arisen. Rigby and Dundas acting on this occasion in concert, called on Lord North to state in his place, the difference of opinion which was presumed to exist in the cabinet. Both of them at the same time avowed and admitted, that no further hope could be entertained of subjecting America by arms. The first lord of the treasury, while he admitted the war with the colonies, to constitute the heaviest calamity of his life, and expressed his warmest wishes for the attainment of peace; neither owned, nor denied the charge brought forward by the lord advocate of Scotland and Rigby, though he attempted to evade it under some loose and general declarations. Worned at length, and attacked no less by his friends, than by his opponents, he adopted the singular expedient of quitting the

treasury bench, and withdrawing to one of the seats behind it; leaving Lord George Germain alone in that conspicuous situation, exposed to the attacks of the opposition. So extraordinary a scene, which spoke with mute eloquence, and from its peculiarity attracted all eyes; left no room to doubt of the dissimilarity of opinion among ministers, on the great question respecting America.

I feel strongly impelled, if I were able, to attempt to lay before posterity, the leading features of that most interesting debate; during the progress of which, the disunion between the two cabinet ministers in the lower house, became for the first time so apparent, as to necessitate Lord George Germain's speedy resignation. He rose at an early period of the evening; compelled by the assertions and accusations of Mr. Thomas Townsend, who maintained that the chancellor of the exchequer and the secretary of state held different or conflicting opinions, relative to the system of warfare prospectively intended to be prosecuted beyond the Atlantic. Lord George having so recently stated, with his characteristic frankness of character, the ideas entertained by him on the point, and his determination never to recede from them, could add little to his preceding observations. He said, that "the king's servants were unanimous on one point, namely, that it was inexpedient, and would be injurious to the country, to withdraw the forces from America." But, Lord North, well aware that the only chance of protecting the king from being compelled to surrender at discretion, was to slip himself out of the present ruinous contest; to allow the American secretary to retire, and then with the royal and parliamentary support that he possessed, to endeavour to extricate the nation from its actual embarrassments; — Lord North, impelled by these motives, held a more equivocal, oracular, and inexplicit language. Fox, sustained by General Conway, endeavoured to force from him a definite reply to their demands; and he underwent, during some time, a species of cross examination. But such was his ability and address in eluding or evading the precise questions put to him,

that little additional information could be extracted from his answers. The house remained, if I may so say, *at fault*. Pitt, with great judgment, selected this moment of painful uncertainty, for his appearance on the scene. In terms of energy he pointed out the contradictions of the two ministers with each other, and of Lord North with himself. "Here then," continued he, "we behold the union and harmony between the members of administration. One asserts that the object of the contest is not to be abandoned. The other gives a more qualified interpretation to those words. The first maintains that the conquest of the colonies is still to be attempted. No, says the second, not to be prosecuted by force. Is it possible that men, thus ignorant of, or unacquainted with each other's intentions, can act in concert, or be unanimous?"

It was on this occasion, and not (as I had erroneously apprehended), the first time of his ever speaking in parliament; that Pitt, observing Welbore Ellis engaged in whispering Lord North and Lord George Germain; apparently with a view of mediating between them, or reconciling their discordant declarations; stopped short. Then looking round upon the house, which was hushed in mute attention, he said with a manner and in a tone still more impressive than the reproof, "I shall wait till the unanimity is better settled; and until the sage *Nestor* of the treasury bench, has brought to an agreement, the *Agamemnon* and the *Achilles* of the American war." The observation, which, independent of its classic beauty and its severity, arose out of an accident, impossible to have been foreseen, could not therefore be premeditated. Its effect was electric, not only on the individuals to whom it was personally directed, but on the whole audience. The two ministers and the treasurer of the navy, in some confusion resumed their former attitudes. We cannot sufficiently appreciate or admire the perfect self-possession, which, while addressing a crowded House of Commons, could dictate to a youth of little more than two and twenty, so masterly an allusion. The conclusion of his speech breathed not a little of the spirit of his deceased father, while he

seemed to lance the vengeance or the indignation of a suffering and exhausted nation, on the heads of ministers; invoking in the same moment, the Divine protection on "a great and innocent family, who, though they have not participated in the culpability, may, and probably will, be doomed to undergo the consequences."

Rigby now unmasked his battery, meant unquestionably to accelerate Lord George Germain's resignation; and thereby to enable the first minister, released from the double burthen of the American war and the American secretary, to ride out the storm. The plan was ingenious, if not solid, and seemed to promise success. No individual in office, had so great a stake to defend as Rigby. During thirteen years and a half, he had occupied the pay office without an associate; and he could not contemplate without natural apprehension, an event so injurious to his own interests, as would be the dissolution of Lord North's administration. Yet, if any opinion may be formed from the encomiums which he lavished on Pitt's resplendent, hereditary talents and virtues, at the opening of his speech; the paymaster of the forces might be thought to anticipate, as not distant, a new order of things, where Pitt would probably occupy an elevated place. Rigby then animadverted with force, on the discordant sentiments expressed by leading members of the opposition, relative to America; some of whom (Fox and Burke), loudly called for the concession of independence to the colonies; while others (particularly Dunning), declared that the minister who should dare to propose such a measure, would be guilty of high treason. While however he pointed out these contradictions of opinion among the minority, he coincided fully with Pitt, that an evident obscurity pervaded the conduct of the two noble lords in office, which appeared to indicate dissimilarity of ideas. And he said that the house, as well as the country, had a right to demand explanation. Still he maintained, we were not ripe for withdrawing the troops from America. Nor could all Fox's blandishments induce him to suggest a motion, by which, both sides of the house concurring in it,

as a parliamentary declaration, ministers might be bound down in their future conduct towards the colonies. But, the lord advocate of Scotland, who was seated on the treasury bench, between the chancellor of the exchequer and the American secretary; and who could not, any more than Rigby, look forward unmoved, to his own fate, which must be involved in the fall of the first minister; answered to Fox's invitation. Coming forward on this critical occasion, with that manly openness of character, which, if not natural to him, he knew so well how to assume when it suited his purpose, Dundas reiterated all the sentiments already expressed by his friend. "If," said he, "there is any one of his majesty's cabinet base enough to remain in office, and to conduct measures that he disapproves or condemns, be he who he will, he is unfit for society." A declaration, so pointed, though ostensibly directed against both the ministers, was in fact intended only against one, Lord George Germain. If its intention could indeed have been doubtful, Lord North's act in removing from his accustomed place, to another seat, while his colleague remained at his post, would have sufficiently explained the mystery. This piece of *dumb show*, one of the most curious that I ever witnessed on that political stage, the House of Commons, lasted for more than three quarters of an hour, while the debate continued, or rather, languished. But, not one word was uttered in further explanation, by either of the two ministers. How far Rigby's and Dundas's conduct was concerted with, or in any manner previously known to Lord North, I cannot presume to assert. Nor did Lord George Germain, as I believe, ever attain any certainty on the point. Probably it arose from their own view of affairs, and was undertaken without communicating the intention to the first minister, though designed to facilitate or effect his ex-
trication. The division which took place on the army estimates, was carried by a very considerable majority in favour of government, the respective numbers being 166, and 84.

From that evening, on which I accompanied him to his residence in Pall-Mall, when he quitted the House of

Commons, Lord George with reason considered his official capacity as virtually terminated, though he continued to exercise its indispensable functions, till a successor should be appointed to the department. The two houses having shortly afterwards adjourned for the Christmas recess, he came to a full explanation with Lord North. At that interview, after professing his readiness to remain in his situation, as long as it could be beneficial to his majesty's service, while the independence of America was not formally recognized; he at the same time earnestly besought Lord North to consider no object except the preservation of the ministry, and the interests of their common master. For that purpose, he advised the first minister to strengthen himself by a negotiation with some of his political enemies; and not to allow any personal considerations towards him (Lord George), to delay, or to impede, for an instant, the arrangements judged to be proper for the general security. Adding, that he had no personal stipulations to make, nor favours to ask; and that he would go down immediately to his seat at Drayton in Northamptonshire, for two or three weeks, in order to allow time to select a successor for his post; after which he would return, and deliver up the seal of his office, on the shortest notice, into his majesty's hands. As the best proof of his sincerity in these opinions, he left London a very few days subsequent to the above conversation.

[20th December.] It must be confessed that something unpropitious seemed to overhang the councils, and to disconcert or overturn the best matured measures of administration, during the course of the American war, so long as Lord North, Lord Sandwich, and Lord George Germain, presided at the head of affairs. This remark or admission may perhaps be considered as synonymous with pronouncing the condemnation of those ministers. But, it was indisputably Lord Sandwich's fleet and admiral, which gained the glorious naval victory over De Grasse, only four months later, though Fox and his party received the benefit of the day. Just at the time of which I now speak, Admiral Kempenfeldt having been despatched with a

squadron of twelve sail of the line, in order to intercept or engage a naval force, intended by France for the West Indies, fell in with the enemy. As they had however been unexpectedly reinforced, so as to increase their numbers to eighteen sail of the line, Kempenfeldt could only capture some of the transports, full of troops, which he sent into our ports. No sooner had this intelligence reached London, than Fox indignantly protested in the House of Commons, that "nothing short of *treachery* could have produced an event so disgraceful and ignominious. Incapacity or ignorance could not alone satisfactorily explain it. An enquiry, if not an impeachment, must be instantly set on foot, against such a first lord of the admiralty. How could they look their constituents in the face, if they had the baseness not to address the throne for his removal?" Mr. Thomas Townsend asked, "how gentlemen could think of going out of town to partake of Christmas pastimes, at a moment when, in his opinion, the fate of the empire would be irrevocably sealed in twelve, or perhaps in six months?" "Adjourn to the 22d of next month!" exclaimed George Byng, on a motion to that effect being made from the treasury bench; "Good God! Mr. Speaker, at a crisis like the present, all the wisdom of the country is required to extricate us. The first lord of the admiralty has ignorantly despatched only twelve or thirteen ships of the line, to meet an armament of nineteen. Is this a measure to be tolerated?" — Keppel, who, as a professional man and a seaman, could not be ignorant that these accusations were exaggerated, if not altogether unjust, held a much more temperate and measured language. He admitted that there did not appear to be any treachery; but, he said, there was palpable neglect and want of naval skill in the board.

Lord North, not at all disconcerted by such a load of imputations, with great calmness and good humour assured the house, no less than Fox, that "the noble individual who presided over the admiralty, far from wishing to avoid an enquiry, was most desirous to meet it." In a speech of considerable length, Lord Mulgrave vindicated the measure of send-

ing out Kempenfeldt, as in itself highly judicious, though unforeseen circumstances had operated to prevent its complete success. But Bamber Gascoyne, irritated at the harsh epithets which Fox had applied so generally to the board at which he held a place, and not restrained by any delicacies where his own character was in some measure compromised, handled the opposition leader more roughly. "The honorable member," said Gascoyne, "is pleased to assert, that we have never yet sent out an equal naval force, since the commencement of the war, to meet the French. Has he forgotten *the 27th of July?* And when Admiral Darby was despatched to the relief of Gibraltar, if his ships were so inferior to the enemy in number as is pretended, the honorable gentleman would do well to *enquire among his friends in France*, why they did not give us the meeting. Hard words are easily used; and the admiralty may be stigmatized from the other side of the house, as negligent, ignorant, corrupt, and treacherous. With more reason, and at least as much truth, may they be denominated *the friends of Mr. Laurens, and the correspondents of Dr. Franklin.*" After a protracted conversation, rather than a debate, accompanied on both sides with much acrimony, the first minister was allowed to carry his proposed adjournment; but not till George Byng, without a division, had moved and carried, to call over the house on the 21st of January. Such were the humiliating circumstances that attended, and ushered in the last scene of Lord North's expiring administration!

[21st December — 21st Jan. 1782.] After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, and the virtual resignation of Lord George Germain, it might naturally be supposed that the first lord of the treasury would lose no time in endeavouring to repair the breach, and to strengthen himself previous to the meeting of parliament after the Christmas holidays. Necessity dictated measures of energy, and the respite which the recess allowed for private negotiation, afforded him time for making every requisite stipulation. Nevertheless, Lord North, though he did not either oppose, or refuse, by no means, however, positively accepted,

even the resignation of the American secretary. And when Lord George returned to London from Northamptonshire, towards the middle of the ensuing month; to his no small astonishment, he found his office still undisposed of, and his successor not more fixed than before he quitted the capital. He therefore waited patiently, till the progress of events should propel the indecision, or hasten the procrastination, of the first lord of the treasury.

Perhaps no part of Lord North's administration, and no feature of his conduct as first minister, during the twelve years that he continued in office, seems more extraordinary; it might be even said, inexplicable; than this loss of time at so critical a juncture. He well knew the opposition to be principally composed of two parties, called after the names of their respective leaders, Lords Rockingham and Shelburne; which bodies of men, though they agreed in endeavouring to dispossess him of power, agreed in no other speculative or practical principle of policy. Scarcely could they even be withheld from mutual animosity, by the near prospect of the prize in view. If, therefore, the point of American independence was once conceded by ministers, there seemed to be no obvious impediment that could withhold Lord Shelburne from accepting a situation under government. It was even well known, that he entertained and avowed very strong doubts, on the propriety or wisdom of making such a concession to the colonies, under any possible circumstances; doubts which were re-echoed by his adherents in the House of Commons; particularly by Dunning. He could not, therefore, it was presumed, be altogether unacceptable to the king. He was, besides, a man of great abilities, the professed disciple of the late Earl of Chatham, and possessed considerable parliamentary interest. Lord North held in his hand various means of conciliating and acquiring his support. Besides the post of secretary of state, and a higher rank in the English peerage, to both which he might aspire; *four Garters* were then lying on the king's table, unbestowed; *one* of which Lord Shelburne actually seized on, as his share of the plunder, when he came into

ministry, within three months from the time of which I speak. All these circumstances seemed therefore to point out that quarter, as the obvious point of application.

I have had many opportunities of discussing this question, with those who were well informed in the secret springs and history of Lord North's administration. But they differed in their solution of the difficulty. It has been confidently asserted, that the king objected to disposing of one of the vacant *Garters* in favour of Lord Shelburne; and absolutely refused to consent to it, when the proposition was made to his majesty, by the minister. We must likewise recollect that George the Third, who at this time had scarcely reigned more than twenty-two years, was encouraged by his past experience to imagine, that he might retain a minister to whom he was attached, in defiance of unpopularity. In fact, Lord North, from his first entrance on office, early in 1770, down to his final resignation, never had been popular. Nor can we well doubt that if he had felt as strong a desire to retain his ministerial situation, and a mind as determined to abide the issue, as his royal master manifested, he might have held out until the victory of the 12th of April, would have raised the siege. Sanguine hopes were likewise entertained at St. James's, that even though all further attempts to subjugate America should be abandoned, yet that the same administration might still continue to conduct the national affairs. Nor was it at all clear that such expectations were chimerical. The session of 1779 had sufficiently proved, that even after being left in a minority, on more than one great public question, a minister who wished to remain in office, possessed the means of doing it, almost in defiance of the House of Commons. If America was admitted to be independent, and that great impediment once removed, peace would probably follow at no long interval; and however unfortunate he had been in carrying on the war across the Atlantic, Lord North might still conclude an honorable pacification with our European enemies. In the House of Peers, he possessed a decided majority; and in the lower House of Parlia-

ment, which had been recently elected, when once government became emancipated from the American war, it was with reason conceived that the opposition would again diminish in energy, as well as in numbers. These reasons, however destitute of solidity they proved, if we try them by the event, may perhaps satisfactorily account for Lord North's seeming supineness, in not endeavouring, at so critical a moment, to divide his opponents, or to augment his own strength.

[21st—31st January.] When parliament met again for the despatch of business, Lord George Germain therefore attended in his place, in the House of Commons: but the tide of opposition, which had been so long principally directed against *him*, as the American secretary, took at first another direction. Lord Sandwich was in turn attacked by Fox, for his asserted mismanagement of the admiralty department; and the first minister, unable to shelter him from investigation, consented to institute an inquiry. Fox said, that "as the naval administration throughout the year 1781, contained or exhibited an epitome of all the blunders committed during the course of the war, he would, for the sake of despatch, confine his accusations chiefly to that period. Lord North, while, with more of the spirit of concession, than of ministerial firmness, he gave way upon every point; yet not only denied the culpability imputed to the Earl of Sandwich, but desired the house to observe that "his noble friend, as well as himself, was ready and prepared to meet an enquiry of a much more comprehensive description." Pitt joining on this occasion, the general outcry raised against an obnoxious minister, accused Lord North of attempting to evade enquiry, by withholding evidence of his colleague's mal-administration: but, the chief blame which could justly attach to the first lord of the treasury, was the too great facility that he manifested in furnishing documents; many of which, when laid on the table of the house, though only in substance, were of a very delicate nature. The solicitor general, and he alone, of all the ministerial supporters, had the boldness to oppose the disclosure and production

of such papers. Undismayed by the augmenting numbers of the opposition, or by the state of depression to which he beheld his friends reduced; Mansfield, with an energy of mind that extorted admiration, entered his protest against an enquiry which demanded such preparatory sacrifices. He declared his astonishment at, and disapprobation of, the communications made in compliance with clamour. "By permitting such an investigation," said he, "and by producing such materials, we destroy the British Constitution, and deprive ourselves of the benefits arising from an executive, as distinct from a legislative government. As well might we permit all the operations of the campaign to be discussed in this house, as to produce upon the table, and thereby disclose to the enemy, the secret information procured by ministers." But, this single reclamation, unsupported, proved wholly ineffectual to stem the torrent; and after considerable discussion, the 7th of the ensuing month was finally fixed on for going into the enquiry.

Among the most strenuous defenders of the first lord of the admiralty, on this occasion was Lord Mulgrave; a nobleman who occupied, himself, a place at that board. His early expedition of discovery towards the North Pole, had given him some naval celebrity; and as he was formed on rather a heavy colossal scale, the opposition, to distinguish him from his younger brother, the Honorable Charles Phipps, who enjoyed likewise a seat in the house, denominated him "Ursa Major." They likewise gave him the name of "Alphesibæus;" I suppose, from some fancied analogy between him and the awkward imitator of the Dancing Satyrs, commemorated by Virgil, in the fifth eclogue of his *Bucolics*. Lord Mulgrave was distinguished by a singularity of physical conformation, possessing two distinct voices; the one, strong and hoarse; the other, shrill and querulous; of both which organs he occasionally availed himself. So extraordinary a circumstance, probably gave rise to a story of his having fallen into a ditch, in a dark night; and calling for aid in his shrill voice, a countryman coming up, was about to have assisted him: but

Lord Mulgrave addressing him in a hoarse tone, the peasant immediately exclaimed, "Oh, if there are two of you in the ditch, you may help each other out of it." In debate, if not animated, he was able, well informed, and pertinacious. Like Dundas, he contrived, after Lord North's administration went to pieces, to attach himself to Pitt; who, in 1784, made him joint paymaster of the forces, and six years later, raised him to the British peerage.

Towards the last days of January, after long fluctuation, Lord North at length communicated to Lord George, his majesty's determination to consent to his resignation, so repeatedly offered; and the resolution taken to supply his loss by Mr. Welbore Ellis. It seemed difficult to have made a selection, in consequence of which less strength would be acquired on the side of administration; Mr. Ellis's talents being already engaged in favour of government, by a very lucrative place, that of treasurer of the navy. His abilities, however eminent and solid, aided by his long experience of parliamentary business, were, nevertheless, altogether unequal to contending in stormy times amidst universal depression, with the vast energies then collected on the opposition benches. He was, besides, far advanced in years; and though his faculties might have preserved all their vigour or freshness, he wanted the requisite fire and animation. His appointment gave satisfaction only to the enemies of the minister, who exulted in a choice that proved the paucity, or rather nullity of the sources, from which he now attempted to derive support.

[February.] Just at this period died Lord Falmouth, at an advanced stage of life: a nobleman, neither distinguished by his talents or his virtues; but whose name, *Boscawen*, is connected with naval recollections of the most gratifying kind. Lord Falmouth commanded the yeomen of the guard, at the time of his death; but my sole motive for mentioning his decease, is in order to commemorate an anecdote respecting him. I have been assured that towards the conclusion of George the Second's reign, when Mr. Pitt, afterwards created Earl of Chatham, occupied a principal

place in the cabinet; Lord Falmouth having waited on him, at his levee, stated his wish to be recommended to his majesty, for the first vacant *Garter*. The secretary of state expressing a degree of reluctance to lay the request before the king, and manifesting some disapprobation of the demand itself; "You will be pleased, sir, to remember," said Lord Falmouth, "that I bring in five votes, who go with ministry in the House of Commons; and if my application is disregarded, you must take the consequence." "Your lordship threatens me," replied the minister with warmth; "You may therefore be assured, that so long as I hold a place in the councils of the crown, you shall never receive the order of the *Garter*." Then turning round, he exclaimed, addressing himself to those near him,

"Optat Ephippia Bos piger."

Lord Falmouth comprehending nothing of the meaning of these words, but conceiving that the monosyllable *Bos*, must allude to his name, requested to be informed what the minister meant by so calling him? "The observation," replied Mr. Pitt, "is not mine, but Horace's." As little familiar with the name of the Roman poet, as he was acquainted with his writings, Lord Falmouth, apprehending that *Horace Walpole* had said something severe or disrespectful concerning him; under that second mistake, "If Horace Walpole," said he, "has taken any liberties with my name, I shall know how to resent it. His brother, *Sir Robert*, when he was alive, and first minister, never presumed so to treat me." Having thus expressed himself, he quitted Mr. Pitt, leaving the audience in astonishment at the effect of his double misapprehension.

Early in the month of February, Lord George Germain having resigned the seal of his office into the king's hand, received in recompense of his services, the honour of the peerage. The particulars attending that elevation, which became immediately afterwards a subject of discussion in the upper house, I received on the same day when they took

place from Lord George's own mouth; and they are too curious, as well as characteristic, to be omitted in these Memoirs. The separation between the sovereign and the secretary, was by no means unaccompanied with emotion on both sides; which became probably augmented by the dark cloud overhanging the throne, together with the painful circumstances that produced the necessity for Lord George's resignation. The king, who could not shut his eyes to these facts, doubtless foresaw the possibility, if not probability of greater changes in the administration, as imminent; of which, the removal of the American secretary was only the forerunner and the presage. After regretting the unfortunate events that had dictated the measure, and thanking Lord George for his services; his majesty added, "Is there any thing that I can do, to express my sense of them, which would be agreeable to you?" "Sir," answered he, "if your majesty is pleased to raise me to the dignity of the peerage, it will form at once the best reward to which I can aspire, and the best proof of your approbation of my past exertions in your affairs." "By all means," said the king, "I think it very proper, and shall do it with pleasure." "Then, sir," rejoined Lord George, "if you agree to my first request, I hope you will not think it unbecoming, or unreasonable in me to ask another favour. It is to create me a *viscount*, as should I be only raised to the dignity of a *baron*, my own secretary, my lawyer, and my father's page will all three take rank of me." The king expressing a wish to know the names of the persons to whom he alluded; "the first," replied Lord George, "is Lord Walsingham, who, as your majesty knows, was for some time, under-secretary of state in my office, when Mr. De Grey. The second is Lord Loughborough, who has been always my legal adviser. Lord Amherst is the third, who when page to my father, the late Duke of Dorset, has often sat on the braces of the state coach that conveyed him, as lord lieutenant of Ireland, to the Parliament House at Dublin." The king smiled, adding, what you say is very reasonable, it shall be so; and now let me know the title that

you choose." "I have already, sir," answered Lord George, "in the possible anticipation of your majesty's gracious dispositions towards me, spoken to the Duke of Dorset, and obtained his permission, as the head of my family, to take the title of *Sackville*; having been compelled to renounce my own name, in order to avail myself of the bequest of the estate of Drayton in Northamptonshire, made me by Lady Betty Germain, in her will. I shall therefore in some degree recover it by this means." "I quite approve of that idea," replied his majesty, "and if you will state to me your title, I will write it down, myself, before we part, and send it directly to the chancellor." The king immediately placed himself at a table, took the pen and ink lying upon it, and having committed the *viscounty* to paper, asked him what *barony* he chose? Lord George answered, "that of Bolebrook in Sussex, being one of the most ancient estates belonging to his family; and contiguous to Buckhurst, the original peerage conferred by Queen Elizabeth, on his ancestor, the first Earl of Dorset." When the king had copied it, he rose up, and with the most condescending expressions of concern, as well as of satisfaction, allowed Lord George to withdraw from the closet. As this is one of the few peerages, which, in the course of half a century, George the Third has been allowed to confer, wholly independent of ministerial intervention or recommendation, from the impulse of his own inclinations, its origin and creation attain an additional interest. Lord North had not the smallest share in the business.

No sooner had the intention of calling up Lord George Germain to the House of Peers, become publicly known, than the Marquis of Carmarthen immediately brought forward the subject before that assembly. He endeavoured to show that it would be derogatory to their honour, as a body, to admit among them a person still labouring under the sentence of court-martial: and though his motion was rejected by a great majority, on the 7th of February, yet he renewed the attack as soon as Lord George had taken his seat, on the 18th of the same month. Conceiving that Lord North must, as first minister, have advised the measure,

the marquis attempted to involve him in the responsibility or culpability of giving such advice to the crown. But, Lord Sackville having exculpated the first lord of the treasury from any participation whatever in the transaction, gave the house clearly to understand, that it flowed solely from the volition of the sovereign. His enemies themselves confessed, that never was a more able, dignified, or manly appeal made within the walls of the House of Peers, than Lord Sackville pronounced on that occasion. He observed, that even admitting in all its force, the justice of the sentence passed by the court martial, yet that tribunal had only declared him "guilty of disobeying Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick's orders; and therefore had adjudged him *unfit* to serve his majesty in any *military* capacity whatever." But, they neither had imposed, nor could they inflict upon him, any civil disability or incapacity. And the attempt of the king, or of the minister of that time, to aggravate the nature or the expressions of the sentence, by any harsh additions and personal comments, could not add to its force. If, after considering the *sentence* published in the case of the general officer, who commanded on the expedition sent in 1806 against Buenos Ayres, we contemplate the tenor of the *orders* that accompanied it; and then compare them with those used in the instance of Lord George Sackville; we shall perceive the contrast presented by the conduct of the two sovereigns, in the strongest point of view. Though General Whitelock was adjudged to be "cashiered, and declared totally unfit and *unworthy* to serve his majesty in any military capacity whatever;" — consequently, though the sentence implies a much deeper degree of error or culpability, than was attributed to Lord George Sackville at Minden, as well as a fault far more clearly established and recognized; yet George the Third, unlike his predecessor, subjoins no injurious reflections, but simply enjoins the publication of it, as a memorial and warning to other officers.

The Duke of Richmond, who took a very active part in the second debate upon Lord Sackville's elevation to the peerage; endeavoured to prove, from the length of time which elapsed after his

reception of Prince Ferdinand's orders to advance, that disinclination only on his part to obey them, could have produced such a delay. As the duke had been personally present at Minden, and as he declared that he held his watch within his hand, during the whole time lost in obeying the prince's orders, which, he asserted, amounted to an hour and a half; his speech might have been expected to make an impression on the house. But, only twenty-eight peers could be found on either debate, to support Lord Carmarthen's motion; though the number voting against it, rose from seventy-five to ninety-three, between the two divisions, on the 7th and the 18th of February. It happened likewise, most unfortunately for the Duke of Richmond, that while he thus attempted to attack Lord Sackville's personal courage, his own lay under very general suspicion. He had brought forward, only a few days before, in the House of Peers, the case of an American Colonel Haynes, executed at Charlestown, under Lord Rawdon's authority, in the preceding year. The expressions or assertions which his Grace used, when relating this transaction, gave such offence to the nobleman against whom they were levelled, that he soon afterwards called the duke to severe account. But as he declined giving any individual satisfaction for an act done in his parliamentary capacity, Lord Rawdon compelled him to declare in his place, that by his accusation he had not intended any attack on Lord Rawdon's justice or humanity: "a declaration, apparently at variance with his preceding charge. Lord George Lenox, as I know, entertained a very different opinion of Lord Sackville's behaviour at Minden, as well as of the sentence pronounced on his conduct, from the ideas expressed by the duke, his brother. Not two years after the facts just related had taken place, I dined in a select company with Lord Sackville and Lord George Lenox, at the house of a general officer in London. When we went up to the drawing room after dinner, no entreaties could prevail on Lord George to walk first out of the apartment. "As the son of a duke of earlier creation, I would do it," said he to Lord Sackville;

but as a general officer, nothing can induce me to precede your lordship." Lord Sackville was restrained by the exhortations and advice of Lord Amherst, from calling on the Marquis of Carmarthen to answer to him personally, for his double attack. I had the honour to know him, before, as well as after, he became Duke of Leeds. He was a nobleman highly accomplished, of the most pleasing manners, of very elegant deportment, of a lofty mind, and of considerable talents. But the part which he took on this occasion, did not constitute the most commendable act of his political life. Posterity will form their opinion on it, divested of prejudice. His contemporaries saw it merely through the optics of party, the most deceptive of all mediums. While only twenty-eight peers supported the motion on both occasions, nearly a hundred voted against it on the final debate. These aggregate numbers appear indeed small *to us*; but, we must recollect the limited extent of the peerage, compared with the present times. It was neither Lord Bute, nor Lord North, but Mr. Pitt, who augmented the members of that house, if not with a profuse, yet unquestionably with an unsparing hand. In 1782 there existed only one hundred and eighty-seven English peers. We have now above three hundred. Perhaps, however, that augmentation, great as it is, bears only a relative proportion to the increase of national revenue, population, and territory, within the last thirty years.

[6th — 20th Feb.] While Lord Sackville was *personally* attacked in one house of parliament, the Earl of Sandwich underwent no less severe an enquiry into his *official* conduct, as first lord of the admiralty, in the House of Commons. Fox, acting as his accuser, united the keenest sarcasms, with the most able and laborious investigation of the naval administration. He was sustained in all his charges, by Mr. Pitt, by Admiral Keppel, and by Lord Howe. Under this accumulation of talent and of eloquence, the minister laboured hard to protect his colleague: but the house began to manifest some indications of reluctance to extend further support. Animated by such obvious symptoms of the

decline of Lord North's influence in that assembly, the opposition renewed their efforts. And if they did not overthrow, they at least shook to its base the ministry. After two debates, protracted to a late hour, in the first of which the members present fell little short of four hundred, a majority of only *twenty-two* appeared on the side of administration. In the second debate, on the 20th of February, where more than four hundred and fifty persons actually voted, a still smaller majority, consisting only of *nineteen*, negatived Fox's proposition, attributing "gross mismanagement" to the nobleman at the head of the admiralty. Two such divisions, following close upon Lord Sackville's resignation, afforded ample triumph to the minority, while they diffused proportionate apprehension among the adherents of government.

I was present at both those debates, and voted on both evenings with ministers. Not that I either then thought, or am even now of opinion, that no degree of error, perhaps of blame, might justly be attributed to the Earl of Sandwich. Fox assumed indeed, as a principle, that "it was not necessary to criminate a minister, in order to address the throne for the removal from office. If he was incapable, or *unfortunate*, or *disliked* ;—any one of those causes constituted sufficient reason for his dismissal. That Lord Sandwich was eminently unfortunate in the selection of naval commanders, with almost the single exceptions of Barrington and Rodney, cannot be denied. Nor was he more fortunate in saving our homeward and outward bound mercantile fleets, many of which fell into the enemy's hands. Neither did our squadrons intercept, combat, and vanquish the fleets of the House of Bourbon, as they had done during the preceding war. All these facts must be conceded. It is equally true that he had incurred a great portion of national ill will, and had made inveterate enemies, particularly in the navy. He was become very generally unpopular in 1782. If therefore, those two reasons are esteemed sufficient to call for his dismissal, no doubt Fox had reasons on his side. But on the article of inability, his attack was altogether untenable. Few men

of high rank possessed and manifested more energy, industry, enlargement of mind, and variety of talent, than that nobleman. He found, on coming into employment, as head of the admiralty, the magazines and store-houses of all the dock-yards, exhausted, or empty. He replenished them. He had, by the vigour of his exertions, overcome the dangerous combinations formed by the workmen in the royal yards. He had repaired near one hundred and fifty ships of war, during his naval administration. But unanimity, concord, enthusiasm, he neither could preserve, nor create, nor revive, among the officers under his department. Probably this calamity originated more in the nature of the war, than from the fault of Lord Sandwich : the obloquy and the punishment however fell upon *him*.

The two debates of the 7th and the 20th of February, had, each, their peculiar features. In the first Fox performed the principal part, as Lord Mulgrave did the second ; one attacking, the other defending the nobleman whose administration was under parliamentary inquiry. Keppel said little ; but Lord Howe flung all his weight into the scale of opposition. Pitt likewise added his powerful eloquence to that party. If ever I beheld Lord North in earnest, by which I mean, anxiously desirous to protect and to justify his colleague, it was on the evening in question. He doubtless felt, that having lost Lord George Germain, and only metamorphosed the treasurer of the navy into a secretary of state, by which transmutation, no accession of interest or of ability would be gained to government ;—if Lord Sandwich should likewise be driven from his situation, his own continuance at the head of his majesty's councils must become very precarious. While, however, he highly justified and even extolled the Earl of Sandwich's professional services, he admitted that many of the most popular naval commanders were unemployed and disgusted ; but he denied that their disgust was by any means attributable to ministers. Sheridan, availing himself with great ingenuity and promptitude, of the chancellor of the exchequer's assertion, called on the admirals present by name,

and invoked them to declare the reasons of their respective retirement from active service. Nor did he fail to represent Lord North's expression, as insulting to those officers, as well as deficient in modesty or decency. Lord Howe nevertheless declined to say one word in explanation of his own motives for withdrawing from employment, though the house waited for some moments, in silent expectation of his gratifying their curiosity. But Pigot, either more irritated against the first lord of the admiralty, or more implicitly devoted to Fox, rose, and explained the causes of his dissatisfaction. They were singular, and obtained belief, when he asserted that having made an offer of his services to Lord Sandwich, that nobleman in reply asked him for his interest at the India House, where several of his own friends were under prosecution for having arrested and confined Lord Pigot, when Governor of Madras. "On my refusing," continued the admiral, "to take part in favour of men who have caused my brother's death, Lord Sandwich, with a sneer informed me, that he would lay before his majesty, my readiness to serve him: but from that hour, I have never received any answer."

I have heard it confidently asserted by persons who were conversant in the secret history of those times, that between the first and the second debate, Lord Sandwich received a proposition, the object of which was to induce him to give in his immediate resignation; offering him, as a recompense for this service done to the crown and to administration, the order of the *Garter*, together with a pension of four thousand pounds a year for life. I have not the least doubt of the truth of this anecdote. Indeed, Fox alluded to it, in the course of the second discussion relative to the nobleman at the head of the admiralty; but he affected to consider it as merely a report set on foot by ministers, in order to serve the purpose of the day, and to mislead the country gentlemen with promises or expectations never intended to be realised. Lord Sandwich rejected the proposal, though coming from Lord North; and though the state of his private fortune was so limited or so embarrassed, as by no means to

place him above the necessity of looking to official situation. Such a rejection seems to indicate that he entertained the most sanguine, though, as the event proved, the most fallacious expectations, of the duration of ministry; or that he grossly miscalculated his own interests. In less than six weeks afterwards, I saw his furniture carrying off from the admiralty, of which official residence, Keppel, just named his successor, was taking possession.

[20th February.] Fox, who opened the second debate on Lord Sandwich, as he had done the first; elated, as it was natural he should be, at the division on the preceding question, began by observing that "under any other administration than the present, the number of persons who had voted with opposition on a former night, would have been regarded as a majority." "For," added he, "they certainly constituted the voice of the people; nor would any minister except the noble lord in the blue ribband, presume to retain a man in employment, against whom the popular sentiment had been so loudly pronounced." The motion, which attributed "great mismanagement to his majesty's naval affairs in the year 1781," was seconded by Pitt; and I believe, it forms the only instance on record, where the one of those two illustrious individuals moved, and the other seconded the same question, during their long parliamentary career. In the progress of the debate, Pitt took an active part, enforcing with great warmth, the proofs adduced of the inability or misconduct of the first lord of the admiralty. From every quarter, government was assailed. General Conway, Dunning, and Sheridan, united on the same side, the powers of reason, wit, and argument; while Admiral Keppel and Lord Howe attacked in detail, by a statement of facts, the official administration of Lord Sandwich; which they stigmatized as deficient in judgment, energy, and activity. Lord North remained silent: but Lord Mulgrave maintained with no inconsiderable ability, the claims of his principal, to national respect, approbation, and gratitude. Dundas, who never absented himself, or shrunk from the call of political adherence, came forward manfully on the occasion. It was how-

ever from another individual that administration received the most seasonable, as well as efficacious aid. Sir William Dolben, whose double capacity, as a country gentleman, and as one of the representatives for the University of Oxford, gave him a proportionate weight; though he admitted the alleged mismanagement to be sufficiently proved by the contents of the papers laid on the table, yet refused to support a motion for the dismissal of Lord Sandwich. Still less, he said, could he concur in a vote for bringing that nobleman to trial. In vain Mr. Thomas Pitt, with the wheedling and querulous eloquence which characterized him, endeavoured to demonstrate the inconsistency or contradiction of such a line of parliamentary action. Vainly he tried to show that no man who concurred in finding the culpability, could hesitate to punish the offender. Sir William Dolben stooped short; declaring at the same time, that he should not even support the present question, if it was intended or understood to be a preliminary to stronger and more personal steps. It became therefore evident that there was a point, at which individuals who were of no party, would make a stand, and withhold their support from opposition.

[22d February.] Every day, from this time down to the hour when Lord North suddenly threw up the administration of affairs, was marked by the most violent exertions on both sides. Incredible efforts were made to procure attendance in parliament. The opposition, conscious that not a moment should be lost, allowed the minister no respite. Having compelled the colonial secretary of state to give in his resignation, and impressed an indelible mark of parliamentary condemnation or censure on the first lord of the admiralty, they directed their next operations against Lord North himself, as the head of the state machine. Scarcely forty-eight hours after the last debate on Lord Sandwich, General Conway introduced a motion for addressing his majesty, "to renounce any further attempts to reduce America by force." Notwithstanding the eloquence of the new secretary of state, Mr. Ellis, who on this occasion displayed very considerable talents, it became impossible to

induce the house to maintain the contest. Burke, in addition to all the arguments suggested by the nature of the subject, and the exhausted condition of Great Britain; oppressed the recently appointed minister, under the flashes of intolerable wit, supported by the keenest ridicule. Never on any occasion was he more happy in his allusions, or more pointed in his irony! After felicitating Mr. Ellis on succeeding as heir to the noble viscount, at whose feet he had been brought up, and whose political opinions he implicitly adopted; Burke compared him to a caterpillar, who having long remained in a torpid state, within the silken folds of his lucrative employment as treasurer of the navy, now bursting his ligaments, fluttered forth, the secretary of the hour. Pursuing this comparison with inconceivable humour, he directed the whole force of his powerful mind, in impelling his audience no longer to support a hopeless, ruinous, and unavailing conflict. I have always considered this debate, as one of the most interesting of any at which I ever was present. General Conway performed the principal, but by no means the most brilliant part in it. The opposition, during the course of this great siege, which in 1782 had already lasted nearly as long as the war of Troy, selected their assailants for each progressive attack, as Homer does his heroes. The general, on whom fell the present effort, was not distinguished by the superiority of his eloquence. Nevertheless, he drew universal attention, when, addressing himself to the new secretary of state for America, he demanded what were the right honorable gentleman's intentions, or on what principles he meant henceforward to conduct the trans-Atlantic contest. Nor was the attention diminished, when, expressing his apprehensions that in Mr. Ellis would survive all his predecessor's political sentiments, Conway exclaimed in the words of Horace to the Roman republic, after the fury of the civil wars,

O Navis! referent in Mare te novi
Fluctus?—

Lord John Cavendish was chosen to second the motion. It must be owned that Ellis's position demanded talents of

no common order, to enable him to meet so severe and so formidable an inquisition. The opposition rows, full in his view, were crowded with eager candidates for power, animated by hope, and impelled by ambition; while a deep cloud overhung the treasury bench, and spread its chilling influence over that part of the house. The new, but aged minister, felt all the awkwardness, difficulties, and embarrassment of his situation. There was even some degree of ridicule attached to a man of seventy accepting such an employment, under the desperate circumstances in which he had taken it, on Lord Sackville's resignation. In order to obviate these objections, Mr. Ellis, after acquitting himself with great circumspection, gravity, and ability, in the course of a long speech, finished by observing, that "he had come into the office which he held, to employ the remains of vigour left him by age and infirmity for the benefit of the state." "I have now made," said he, "my confession of faith, and trust it may prove satisfactory to the house." Burke instantly fastened like a vulture on the secretary's declaration. "A confession of faith," observed he, "more obscure, more absurd, more incomprehensible, was never framed or delivered for the delusion and calamity of mankind! Like confessions of faith of the same unintelligible description, it can only be supported by miracles. For, what satisfaction has the *young* secretary given to the house? Not one word have we been able to extract from him, which the last American minister has not told us, five years ago. The name may indeed be changed, and henceforward it may be denominated a French war, carried on in the fields of America: but, the fatal system remains unaltered." Then fixing his eyes upon Ellis, "I may assert," continued he, "that the late colonial secretary, though called up by patent to another house, still occupies in effigy his ancient seat. There we behold him, with all the plans for reducing America, thick upon him. He is the universal legatee of the noble lord, who has bequeathed to him all his own projects; nay, his very language and ideas; his *ipsissima verba*. He still lives and speaks among us, only trans-

formed into the appearance and form of the right honorable gentleman."

Jenkinson having risen soon afterwards, with the intention of explaining to the house, the precise description of the war prospectively intended to be carried on beyond the Atlantic, and thus satisfying the enquiries of opposition; observed, that "his idea embraced only *a war of posts*; to retain henceforward no regular army in the field; but, while we kept possession of certain military positions, to attack the enemy whenever any favourable occasions should present themselves." As Burke had pounced upon the secretary of state, so Fox started up to answer the secretary at war. After congratulating the house and the country, that *two hundred and nineteen* independent men had been found on the recent question respecting the nobleman at the head of the admiralty; he observed, that if the people would only consider the number of placemen and contractors, who most unworthily occupied seats in that assembly, the late division must be esteemed an unequivocal majority against administration. "I am, however, glad," exclaimed he, "to have at length ascertained from the speech of the right honorable gentleman that has just sat down, who is that evil spirit which produces all our calamities. It is *an individual higher than the noble lord in the blue ribband*:—for, that noble person is only his puppet, and acts under his direction. The right honorable member has spoken out, and I will take the word of a *principal*. Those ostensible ministers who occupy seats on the same bench near him, are merely *secondary and subordinate agents*. That *infernal spirit which really governs, and has so nearly overturned this country; a spirit, which, though not so visible as ministers, is far greater than them; has spoken through the mouth of the right honorable gentleman*. We now perceive that the war beyond the Atlantic, is to be prosecuted as violently as heretofore, but it is to be carried on with America, and not in America." Jenkinson rose, solely for the purpose of disavowing that he was animated by any spirit except his own, and the debate took a new turn.

When we reflect on the import of Fox's expressions, and consider how obviously, or rather unavoidably they applied to the sovereign; — if we further call to our attention, that Fox was at that very moment a candidate for high office, and became actually secretary of state to the prince against whom he had levelled such imputations, within six weeks after he used them in parliament; we ought not to be surprised that his majesty could not immediately obliterate them from his recollection. Even had they been as well founded, as I consider them to have been erroneous or exaggerated, they were not the less contrary to every dictate of prudence. Pitt, however violent and personal he might be against ministers, yet observed measures in his indignation. The different political fortunes of the two individuals, flowed principally from this opposite line of conduct. Fox, in the ardour of his pursuit, forgot that any moderation was necessary, either towards the king, or towards Lord North. He ought nevertheless to have foreseen, how soon contingencies might impel him to coalesce with the minister, whom he now held up to national aversion. And he should have remembered that it is easier to force the barriers of state, than to stand firm within them. He seemed never to recollect that the Marquis of Rockingham's *first* administration lasted scarcely ten months. His *second* possession of power, was fated to be of much shorter duration. So difficult is it, even under the British Constitution, to govern without the consent or inclination of the monarch!

Lord North, who never wanted presence of mind, or betrayed any defect of capacity; and who knew that however odious the American war had become, he was personally beloved; endeavoured to stimulate the opposition to propose an address to the crown for his removal, as being, he said, a measure more advantageous to the state, than to leave him ostensibly possessed of power, while his hands would be fettered by resolutions of the house. But, Fox and his adherents well knew that they could not carry any such proposition. They were only powerful upon one point. Fox endeavoured on his side, to induce

the lord advocate of Scotland to vote with them for the termination of the American war; charging him with inconsistency, or with personal animosity, towards the late American secretary, if he should now support the very measures when proposed by Mr. Ellis, which he had reprobated from the lips of Lord George Germain. It must be owned that Dundas lay open to that imputation, as did Rigby; though they both justified themselves with ingenuity. The paymaster of the forces, while he avowed that no hope of reducing the colonies to obedience now remained, and professing at the same time his ardent desire of peace, yet refused to tie up the powers of the executive government. Both the *Pitts*, William and Thomas, exerted their different oratorical efforts on that night, and might be considered as well entitled to

“Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale.”

The former, dignified, impressive, collected, was always heard with a sort of veneration, as the living substitute of him who under two successive reigns had subjected our foreign enemies, while he trampled opposition under his feet. The latter, solemn and declamatory, if not theatrical; sometimes whining, yet often appealing with great effect to the passions, or the understanding of the house, scarcely drew less attention. Their joint co-operation unquestionably conduced to the success, which crowned the party at the conclusion of the debate. On that night, the American war may indeed be said to have virtually terminated; the question being carried on the part of government, by only *one* vote, though near three hundred and ninety members divided. Many of those who supported the minister, seemed not less rejoiced at the apparent conclusion of the war than the persons on the opposite side: and it has been supposed, with reason, that Lord North himself, whose disinclination to prosecute hostilities beyond the Atlantic, was well known; did not really regret, though he was necessitated to oppose, the motion of General Conway. Far from manifesting any intention of laying down his office in consequence of it, he

performed one of the most important functions of first minister, only three days afterwards, by opening the *budget*, and proposing a loan. It is true that he postponed the task of stating the taxes to be imposed; but he did not the less declare his determination to continue at the head of his majesty's councils: nor did those persons who were most in his confidence, either question his sincerity, or doubt his resolution.

[25th February.] Retaining, as it was natural that he should do, a deep and acute recollection of the severe investigation (which Fox denominated *chastisement*), inflicted on him for the terms on which he had concluded the loan of the preceding year; Lord North adopted every precaution on the present occasion, to protect himself from similar animadversion. Instead therefore of allowing individuals to make private offers, he preferred a close subscription with two different sets of men, each ignorant of the conditions proposed by the other. Notwithstanding this renunciation of all ministerial influence in the distribution of any part of the loan, he by no means succeeded in disarming his opponents, or in silencing calumnious imputations. George Byng attacked the terms, as in themselves bad, though he admitted them to be far less exceptionable than those of 1781. But Fox inveighed against "the mode adopted by the noble lord, of limiting loans to a few individuals, which he maintained to be merely a manœuvre of government." "Under that dark cloak," exclaimed he, "are concealed all the douceurs given to members of this house, to placemen and contractors. Here we may perceive how the majorities were procured, which have voted the prosecution of the American war, as well as the rejection of the motions relative to the navy. Justly indignant at such a charge, and conscious of the rectitude of his ministerial conduct, Lord North rose to repel the accusation. "I solemnly and seriously protest," said he, "that so far from having negotiated the present loan with any view to influence, I have not, directly or indirectly, recommended one person for the smallest share or portion of it. Nor do I even know by whom the ostensible contractors for it are supported in making their pay-

ments. Two millions of it were indeed offered to me, to be filled up with whatever names I might select; but I peremptorily refused the proposal."

Still incredulous, or more properly to speak, determined not to be convinced, Mr. Thomas Townsend affected to suppose, that though the first minister had not interfered personally in the distribution of the loan, yet the official persons who surrounded him, were unable to make the same declaration. "Would the two secretaries of the treasury venture to assert, that they had not recommended individuals to fill the lists of the ostensible contractors for the loan?" This question called up Robinson, who protested upon his honour that he neither had recommended, nor would mention any person to be placed on the list. Sir Grey Cooper reiterated the same assurances; adding, that they could not, even had they been so inclined, disobey the positive injunctions of the first lord of the treasury. Burke pretended, notwithstanding such specific declarations on the part of men in office, to consider the bargain as calculated to conceal, while it promoted ministerial influence. It is however well known that never was any measure of finance conducted on principles more pure, disinterested, and wholly exempt from a view to sustain administration. It was indeed so exempt from any imputation or reproach of that nature, by the total exclusion of members of parliament who had anticipated a share in it, as to have occasioned in consequence of the disappointment, some mercantile catastrophes, and even some more melancholy domestic or personal scenes, over which I draw a veil. Lord North having stated the amount of the loans, and the nature of the terms proposed, entreated of the house to excuse him if he did not enter on the enumeration of his intended taxes for a few days; "possessing," he said, "neither strength of body, nor sufficient intellectual power and clearness of understanding, to comply with the ordinary practice of laying before them on the same evening, both the loan and the taxes." This indulgence was not denied him.

It became indeed apparent, that though a majority of the House of Commons

might be still disposed to support the ministry, they were altogether weary of continuing that contest for the reduction of America, which during near seven years had produced only an accumulation of expense, of disgrace, and of misfortune. But on the other hand, the opposition soon discovered that the compulsory termination of the American war, and the resignation of Lord North, constituted by no means, as they had flattered themselves, things synonymous, or inseparable. When General Conway, encouraged by the event of his late motion, brought the subject again before the house, he indeed out-numbered the minister on the division, by *nineteen*, leaving him thus in a minority.

[27th February.] On this occasion Conway attempted to induce, or rather to oblige Dundas and Rigby to vote with him, by reminding them of their late declarations respecting the American war. And he observed, that "if he might borrow an allusion from the sacred text, he should say that they, as well as many other members of the house, had received the gift of tongues. Cloven tongues had alighted upon them. Not, indeed, tongues of sincerity and truth; but *double tongues*; one for parliament, the other for private society." This singular metaphor, drawn from such a source, excited no ordinary sensation. Lord North, who no doubt felt that his own sincerity might become questionable at St. James's, if he did not strenuously oppose the motion; endeavoured by every pledge and assurance that he could give, to prove that ministry had renounced all intention of carrying on offensive war beyond the Atlantic. "If, however," he added, "no faith was lent to these protestations, and that the truth or integrity of ministers was doubted, it became the house to address the crown for their removal, and for the appointment of successors entitled to parliamentary confidence. Should this house," continued he, "withdraw from me the confidence which they have so long reposed in me, it will become my duty, without staying for an address to remove me, to wait on my sovereign, to present him the seal of my office, and to say, sir, I have served you long and zealously; but

your parliament will no longer confide in me. Suffer me therefore to resign into your majesty's hands, all my employments, in order that they may be bestowed on some other person, who, with better success, though not with more fidelity or zeal, will give satisfaction to the country." Then adverting to Conway's reproach of the "cloven tongues." He subjoined with more than common emphasis, "I do not wish for the support of any such double-tongued senators. I desire to stand this night solely on the merits of my cause. And I now call upon all my friends to put out of their view, every consideration personal to myself. Let them vote according to the dictates of their unbiassed judgment! The removal of ministers forms no punishment. His majesty has a right to call to his councils, or to exclude from them, whomever he may please. I thank God, Mr. Speaker, that mere disgrace, in the ministerial sense of the term, constitutes no crime! The Constitution has conferred on the king, the power of dismissing his confidential servants at his pleasure; but it has provided that the dismissal shall not entail any criminality; because in the eye of the law no individual can be pronounced criminal without a fair trial." Never, probably, in the records of parliament, was a more manly, yet affecting appeal made by any minister, to the feelings and principles of his audience. When Lord North sat down, the attorney general rose; and after pointing out the impediments that presented themselves to an immediate *peace* with the colonies, proposed a *truce*, as at once more judicious, beneficial, and practicable. He added, that he had already prepared a motion for leave to introduce a bill, enabling the ministers to treat on this ground. And with a view to expedition, in order that not a moment might be lost, he concluded by moving that "the present debate be adjourned for a fortnight."

Alarmed at the idea that in consequence of the attorney general's proposition, the prey which they had so nearly hunted down, might yet escape them; the leading members of opposition fastened upon it with equal violence and

ability. Pitt led the way, and endeavoured to demonstrate, as he had done in preceding debates, that no confidence could be reposed in the ministerial promises. "Was there," he demanded, one assurance which they had not falsified? Was there any plan of operations in which they coincided? No! Their whole system was incessant vacillation, in which the house could place no trust." With uncommon ingenuity and acumen, Dunning, who already beheld a coronet, as Macbeth does a dagger, marshalling his way; and who within five weeks afterwards actually kissed the king's hand, on being raised to the peerage;—Dunning attacked the minister's speech, as the most unintelligible and incomprehensible farrago, ever pronounced within the walls of the house. He protested that he did not understand one syllable of it; that it was a mere specimen of human duplicity, calculated for purposes of state deception, unworthy of reply. His learned friend (Wallace's) *truce*, he treated as a wretched stratagem of an expiring party, only designed to allure over to the minister's side, three or four undecided votes. With persuasive earnestness he entreated the assembly to support the motion proposed by Conway, as the only temperate and conclusive measure for binding down the administration. Fox added his weight to these arguments, and stigmatised the proposed *truce*, which he denominated a trick, adopted for the purpose of protracting the existence of ministry, who hoped thereby to gain the respite of a few days.

The new secretary of state took no active part in the discussion of that interesting evening, nor once opened his lips. He seemed indeed not to have recovered the effect produced by Burke's insulting irony, only a few days earlier, and contented himself with giving a silent support. Not so Dundas. The characteristic energy of his mind always propelled him forward; and having answered General Conway's imputation of speaking with a *double tongue*, which act of inconsistency he disclaimed, either in, or out of parliament, he warmly supported the attorney general's proposal. But it was likewise sustained

from another quarter. Sir William Dolben, who had voted with opposition on the 22d, rose for the purpose of declaring that he considered the proposed measure of a *truce*, as the most proper to be adopted, and refused to proceed another step against the existing administration. As his example might operate with great effect upon the country gentlemen, who formed so large, as well as so respectable and independent a portion of the assembly, Sir William was instantly assailed from a variety of quarters. Mr. Thomas Townsend besought him to examine his conscience, before he gave so inconsistent a vote; while Powis lamented the defection of an individual, whose private character justly excited universal respect. "As a friend," said he, "I regret, but as a member of this house, I reprobate his line of conduct. Nor do I comprehend how, after such contradictory behaviour, he can look his constituents or his country, in the face." Sir Fletcher Norton endeavoured to demonstrate, that the former motion of Conway, and the present, were in fact the same: adding, that there had not happened any change of public affairs, which could warrant or justify an alteration of sentiment in the honorable baronet.

Sir William nevertheless remaining inflexible, and having risen a second time, in order to explain more accurately the principles which determined his resolution; Sheridan opened on him a battery of wit, calculated to expose him to universal ridicule. It is however probable that had Lord North survived the session, and continued at the head of affairs, so important a service, rendered at a crisis of such general depression and dismay, would not have remained unrewarded. A peerage might with reason have been conferred on a man, whose support was above all estimation under the existing circumstances. The detestation nevertheless, universally excited by the American war, had reached such a point, as to overbear every attempt to prolong its duration. Previous to the debate, the sheriffs of the city of London had presented at the bar, a petition from the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council, imploring the house to interpose in such manner as they should

conceive to be most effectual, for terminating further hostilities against the colonies. Many of the most ancient adherents of the minister began to waver. Sir Gilbert Elliott, who had hitherto uniformly supported administration, made his retraction, and joined the opposition. Soon after one o'clock in the morning, the cry of question became general. Two hundred and thirty-four persons voted with Conway. Only two hundred and fifteen adhered to the minister. No sooner was the result known, and the triumph over Lord North ascertained from the chair, than the acclamations, — for, such they might be justly denominated; — pierced the roof, and might have been heard in Westminster Hall. Two of the *tellers* on that eventful night, still survive: I mean, the Earl of Lauderdale, and Mr. Baron Adam. The other two, Robinson and George Byng, are long since dead. Information of the event was instantly transmitted, notwithstanding the advanced hour, to his majesty, at the queen's house. Conway following up the blow, carried without any division, before the assembly adjourned, an address to the throne, soliciting the sovereign to "stop the prosecution of any further hostilities against the revolted colonies, for the purpose of reducing them to obedience by force." It was ordered to be presented by the whole house.

[1st — 4th March.] Under these critical and portentous circumstances, which seemed to announce still greater changes or convulsions as imminent, opened the month of March. The king nevertheless retained all his firmness; and though the reply that he made to the Commons when they arrived at St. James's, was couched in gracious language, yet the terms of it might be esteemed vague and general; only stating that "he would adopt such measures as he should think most conducive to *restore harmony* between Great Britain and her colonies," without specifically promising not to carry on any further *operations of war* for their reduction by force. A fact which made a still deeper impression upon the public mind, and which the opposition considered as eloquently developing the royal feelings towards his American

subjects, was the appearance of General Arnold at court, when the king received the address. So obnoxious an individual, known to breathe an inveterate aversion towards his insurgent countrymen; standing close to his majesty's chair on such an occasion, and at his right hand, inspired alarm, while it produced animadversion. Lord Surrey, than whom no man of whatever rank, inherited more of the rough spirit of the barons who forced John to sign the "*Magna Charta*;" and who was never deterred by any delicacy or respect for the prejudices of a crowned head, from uttering his opinions, however unpalatable they might prove: — this nobleman, who began already to perform a prominent part under Fox, in the parliamentary drama, rising in his place, a few days afterwards, reprobated in the warmest manner, "the wanton and indecent insult," as he denominated it, offered by ministers in the drawing room, to the representatives of the people. No notice having however been taken of his complaint, from any part of the house, it did not produce any further debate or proceeding.

[4th March.] General Conway, now completely master of the deliberations of the lower house, on the subject of America; and not conceiving the renunciation of all future hostilities against the colonies, to have been expressed from the throne, in words sufficiently affirmative; presented himself once more to public notice. While he proposed and carried another address to the sovereign, thanking him for his gracious reply; with some inconsistency he moved immediately afterwards to declare "enemies to his majesty and to their country, all those who should advise or attempt to prosecute offensive war on the continent of North America." The first lord of the treasury, after exposing the contradiction of the mover's conduct, in thus affecting to offer their acknowledgments to the king for his answer, and in the same breath manifesting their doubts of his sincerity; observed, that whatever might be his private opinions, he conceived it his indispensable duty to obey the orders of a majority of that assembly. "But," added he, "parliament having expressed its commands, it is scarcely possible that any minister can be found,

sufficiently bold, daring, and infamous, to advise his sovereign to act in opposition to their wishes. I cannot therefore conceive that the present motion, which assumes and pre-supposes the existence of such a minister, can ever be necessary." Nor did this objection constitute the sole ground on which Lord North combated the proposition, as he asserted that very considerable obscurity pervaded the orders themselves; which circumstance might incapacitate even the best intentioned cabinet from knowing with certainty, whether they were adhering to, or deviating from the pleasure of the house.

After a discussion of considerable length, in which Thomas and William Pitt both took part, as well as many other members; but, without materially elucidating or explaining the points under investigation, Fox rose, and began by expressing his total dissatisfaction with the answer of the crown. He observed, that he was not present in the house, when they voted an address of thanks to the king, as he understood, unanimously; though, had he been there, he should certainly have coincided in that testimony of personal respect to the sovereign. The ministers alone ought to be deemed criminal, for advising their royal master to follow a plan of conduct opposed to the advice of his faithful commons. Then directing his discourse personally to Lord North, in answer to the professions of deference which he had made for the orders of a majority of that assembly; Fox, with more asperity than was natural to him, inveighed against these illusory protestations, only adopted or forgotten, just as the exigencies of his situation dictated. "The position of the noble lord," exclaimed he, "is truly embarrassing. The majority of this house has been, and is against him. Yet still he retains his place. He stands in a predicament unprecedented since the revolution. He remains in office, when the commons have condemned his system. Under circumstances so unconstitutional and humiliating, he must necessarily address his sovereign when he enters the royal presence, in language to the following effect, 'I come, sire, to advise you to adopt a measure totally opposite to my

own opinion; but it is the opinion of a majority of the House of Commons.' Is then this country so reduced by calamities, so poor in spirit, or so indifferent to all events, as to permit a minister to conduct affairs, in a moment big with danger like the present, who dares not carry into execution his own plans?—No man respects more than I do, the free, incorrupt voice of the majority of this house: but when I contemplate the majority composed of contractors, procured by means the most corrupt, who have been declared ineligible to sit here I do not respect such a majority."

"I thank God," continued Fox, "that the House of Commons has come to the resolutions which terminate the American war! Those resolutions have utterly destroyed and annihilated the principle, they have subverted the basis, of the present system, *corruption*. It is not credible that any minister, however daring or profligate he may be, can presume to retain his employment after the intelligence which has just reached us, of the capture of Minorca, where fifteen hundred troops have surrendered prisoners of war. The loss of that valuable possession, in the year 1756, drove from their seats an administration, far more able and powerful than the present cabinet. This day, a report is current that St. Kitt's has been taken by the enemy; the most important island, with the single exception of Jamaica, which we still continue to retain in the West Indies. — The only victory to which the people of this fallen country look with hope, or which they hear with exultation, is the triumph recently gained within these walls, over his majesty's ministers, who are universally regarded as the enemies of their country. This triumph coming now, has overcome *corruption*. Its reign is terminated. If the conquest had sooner taken place, perhaps some paltry, insignificant *coalitions* might have been contrived, which would have rendered less unpalatable the system itself. But now, however ministers may hold out for a day, a week, a month, or even for a year, the foundation is subverted. It must collapse; and then effectual measures may be devised to prevent its future revival."

Such was nearly the substance of this

memorable speech, unquestionably one of the most able, as well as persuasive, ever pronounced by Fox, and which produced a proportionate effect on the audience. Many parts of it were indeed unanswerable; and the new secretary of state scarcely could reply to the concluding enquiries of Fox relative to the fate of St. Kitt's, which he however did in a few hesitating, spiritless sentences. Lord North remained silent, nor did the lord advocate advance to his assistance; and under so depressed a state of things, the speaker had already prepared to put the question, when Rigby rose. Never could he have appeared more opportunely on the scene, or at a moment when his exertions were more necessary to re-invigorate the ministerial ranks. His very figure and aspect, unblushing, fearless, confident, as if formed to stem the torrent of opposition even when most violent, powerfully aided the effect of his oratory. He commenced by observing, that though it was not his intention to divide the house, yet he should unquestionably give his negative to the motion, in order that it might not pass unanimously. And he remarked on the singularity, as well as inconsistency, of disapproving his majesty's answer, and yet returning him thanks for it. This conduct sufficiently proved that the charge so often made against ministers, of being divided among themselves, might with more justice be applied to opposition. "As to the motion," subjoined he, "declaring enemies to their country, all such as should advise the king to continue war against the colonies, I consider it nugatory: because I cannot suppose that any member of administration, will dare to disobey the positive injunctions of this house. But probably it has been devised and adopted, merely to calm tender consciences, thereby to conceal dissensions. Thus, the vote of thanks, and the present motion, are intended to balance each other. I imagine, one set of men may have consented to support the first; under the condition, that another description will agree to vote the second."

"Much has been said," continued Rigby, "about *majorities* which have voted against the noble lord in the blue ribband. And how has he got the better

of those resolutions? Why, by other majorities. It has always been the cry, that the *ins* were corrupt, and the *outs* were factious. But it forms no political phenomenon, that a minister should retain his place after he has been left in a minority. All sides of this house have been occasionally wrong. Lord Rockingham's administration, which repealed the stamp act, yet declared the *right* of parliament to make laws for America. Even the honorable member who now represents Westminster, voted for the *Boston Port Bill*. If so little faith is to be reposed in the assurances of his majesty's ministers, better move at once to remove them from their employments." The blunt, not to say contemptuous levity, accompanied with some personal observations of a disagreeable kind which characterized Rigby's speech from its commencement to its close, gave a new colour to the debate, while it excited no ordinary commotion among the opposition ranks. Fox, whose early parliamentary transgressions, when formerly seated near Lord North on the treasury bench, frequently appeared to him, like Brutus's evil genius, started up to explain his unfortunate vote on the Boston Port Bill. His excuse seemed, I believe, even to his friends, not the most satisfactory; as he could assign no better reason for it, than that Lord North had pledged himself, if the tea which the Americans threw overboard was paid for by them, he would drop all farther idea of taxation.

Rigby having, in the progress of his speech, said rather unadvisedly, that "he was tired of the American war, though as paymaster of the forces, he was by no means tired of receiving cash;" which singular expression he, however, qualified by adding, that he could nevertheless speak his opinion honestly, uninfluenced by his place;" Mr. Pitt remarked with great severity on the words. He observed, that "if the right honorable gentleman was not tired of receiving, the nation was weary of paying cash to a person who profited more by the war than any four members of that assembly." Almost any other individual than Rigby would have been disconcerted by so invidious a comment, coming, too, from such a quarter. But he,

far from shrinking back, or exhibiting the slightest mark of discomposure, stood up; and directing his looks, as well as his reply, to Pitt and Fox, who sat very near each other on the opposition side of the house, almost under the gallery, "I will just venture to remark," said he, "that however lucrative my office may be, it has been held by the *fathers of the two honorable members who spoke last*; and I make little doubt that whenever I may be compelled to quit it, *those gentlemen themselves may have an eye to getting hold of it*. I repeat, I am not at all tired of receiving money; but I am not to be told, because I receive the emoluments of my place, that I am therefore the author of my country's ruin." Neither Fox nor Pitt attempted any retort. The former, indeed, on all occasions treated Rigby with marked regard; and more than once had spoken in his place of that gentleman's ability, independence of mind, and political principles, in terms approaching to panegyric. But Barré, after complaining that he had retained in his hands as paymaster, an enormous balance of public money, amounting to near 900,000 pounds, adverted with much acrimony to the aspersions thrown out against the opposition, as being only a rope of sand. Conscious how much they were divided in sentiment upon almost every point, he endeavoured to derive an inference from that very dissimilarity of opinion favourable to their principles. "A desire to prevent the ruin of their country, which the present ministers," he said, "had nearly effected, formed the tie that bound them indissolubly together." The debate now drew to a close, General Conway's motion passing without any division. Rigby had acted the most conspicuous part in the discussion, had gallantly exposed himself, and had covered the minister's retreat, though the enemy kept possession of the field. These were services at such a crisis, of no ordinary description, and could scarcely have been performed by any other member of the house. Indeed, had Lord North been animated by the same tenacious, firm, and buoyant spirit which the paymaster of the forces displayed, he would probably have surmounted the storm. Already Sir George

Rodney had reached the West Indies, and was preparing to attack the fleet of France. But his administration was destined to a speedy extinction.

[5th March.] If the debate of which I have endeavoured faithfully, though imperfectly, to trace the outlines, unveiled so much of the concealed machinery, and private feelings of both parties, during the convulsions that preceded Lord North's political exit; the discussion, or rather, the conversation of the following evening, disclosed matter not less interesting. The attorney general having moved for leave to bring in a bill "to enable his majesty to conclude a *truce or peace* with the revolted American colonies;" Fox aware that unless he could blunt this weapon, the minister might cut his way by means of it, through the opposition squadrons which now nearly hemmed him in, rose instantly to force it out of the hands of government. "The only treatment properly applicable to such a proposition, coming from such a quarter," he said, "would be to burst into laughter, and instantly to quit the house. Ministers, after leaving us scarcely any possession except Jamaica and Gibraltar; after refusing to suffer American agents to meet our plenipotentiaries, under the offered mediation of foreign powers; now pretended to desire peace. Let the learned gentleman only look to his right and to his left, he would there discover in the persons of the ministers, his friends, the greatest impediments to a pacification. But before he sat down, he had a proposal to make to administration." "I can inform them," added he, "as a matter of certainty, that there are persons now in Europe, fully authorised to negotiate peace between us and the colonies. *And though I believe those individuals will not treat with the present ministers, yet I can put them in the way to make peace. Nay more, should they dislike personally coming forward, I would undertake, myself, to negotiate it for them.*" Observing a smile on more than one countenance opposite to him, he added, that in making such a proposal, he was not more inconsistent than the noble lord acted, who condemning the resolutions moved by General Conway, yet advised his

sovereign to execute them. "Our affairs," continued Fox, "are so desperate, that ministers must either quit their places, or the country is lost! Let *them* enjoy then the emoluments which they hold so precious, provided I can only save the empire. *If peace can be procured, I am ready to serve them in any capacity even that of a commis, or of a messenger.*" Conscious that this patriotic ebullition might subject him to some comments, and perhaps apprehensive that it bore the appearance of personal approximation to a government, the members of which he had during many successive years held up to national condemnation or contempt; he subjoined, "I request it may be clearly understood, that in making the proposition, I mean not to enter into any connection with ministers. *From the instant when I act, or come to terms with one of them, I will rest satisfied to be deemed infamous. I cannot for a moment contemplate a coalition with men, who, as ministers, in every transaction, public or private, have proved themselves devoid of honour or honesty. In the hands of such men, I would not entrust my own honour for a single minute.*"

This extraordinary declaration, one of the most imprudent and ill advised which Fox ever made in the course of his long parliamentary life; was probably intended by him to impress a belief on his hearers and the public, of the facility with which *he and his party* could obtain an honorable peace. Nor if considered under that point of view, did it fall, like other political delusions, practised in all ages, to produce a temporary effect. Wearied with the war, people of every description, readily supposed that he could succeed in disposing the Americans to conciliation. And they assumed with the same credulity, that administration would either find or fabricate impediments to a consummation so generally and anxiously desired. Unquestionably, therefore, the expressions used by Fox, operated favourably to the views and objects of opposition. I will fairly own that I was, myself, in some degree duped by them, in common with others; and expected from Mr. Fox's entrance into office, the return of peace, as if by a charm. The event

greatly deceived expectation. In whatever way, however, Fox's speech affected parliament and the nation, it drew from the minister a reply full of dignity, independence of mind, and becoming resentment. Nor did he fail to mix in the dose, some portion of that wit, without a few grains of which ingredient, Lord North rarely addressed the house. He began by denying in the most forcible terms, the disinclination to peace, charged against himself and his colleagues in the cabinet. Then advertng to the *kind offer* which Fox had just made of his services, coupled at the same time with his severe language relative to administration; Lord North observed, "These are good and substantial reasons for not trusting his honour in my hands. Better reasons cannot be assigned; and as they are such, they shall serve me against the honorable member. I will never employ a person, who publicly declares that he can repose no confidence in me. Thinking of him as I do, I am determined not to make him my negotiator. He seems in a great hurry to get possession of our places. I am however yet to learn that among those who are so impatient to succeed, there exists any settled agreement or system of action. It will therefore be for the public good that I should remain in office, in order to prevent, as I have hitherto done, confusion in the state, and the introduction of unconstitutional principles. *I am for that reason resolved not to quit my post, until I shall receive my royal master's commands to leave it; or 'till the will of this house, expressed in the most unequivocal terms, shall point out the propriety of my withdrawing from employment.* As to the emoluments of my situation — God knows, were they forty times greater than they are, they could form no adequate compensation for my anxiety and vexations, aggravated by the uncandid treatment that I frequently experience within these walls! It is not love of power or of greatness, that retains me in my place. I speak in the presence of individuals who know how little I am attached to either; but I will not resign, till I can do it with gratitude to my sovereign and to the public."

Fox attempted partly to explain away the harsh epithets which he had applied to the minister, and partly to hold up the speech just pronounced, to ridicule or condemnation. But its impression was indelible. Neither Wolsey, nor Strafford, nor Clarendon, ever made a finer appeal to their contemporaries, nor to posterity! In reply to Fox's accusations, accompanied with a sneer at his asserting that he continued in place, to prevent confusion, Lord North humorously observed, "I undoubtedly have prevented much confusion; and if I have not prevented more, it is only because there are others who possess greater abilities in creating confusion, than I have to prevent it. But so long as parliament shall not think proper to remove me, either by a vote, or by wholly withdrawing from me their confidence; the honorable gentleman must excuse me, if I determine to hold my situation." Who, after so precise, so public, and so reiterated a declaration, could have anticipated or expected, that within fifteen days, though the house had *not* withdrawn from him its confidence, Lord North would, standing in the same place, and in the midst of the same assembly, lay down his office! Fox made no further answer, and the attorney general's motion passed without any division: while the minds of all men were attracted towards the final termination of a scene so interesting to every individual; but, the issue of which, it was as yet impossible to foresee, from the conduct or the protestations of the first minister.

[6th March.] With a view to the great object of keeping alive public clamour against Lord North, and above all of not allowing the irritability of parliament to subside; when that nobleman, on the following day, requested the indulgence of the house for postponing the taxes, on account of the hurry of business, Burke and Fox, both, declaimed with violence on the subject. The former, after enumerating the articles of necessity or of luxury, on which taxation had already fallen within the last few years, and deploring the state of financial exhausture into which we were plunged, concluded by making an ingenious and fanciful exposition of our national condition, viewed under a mercantile form. "On

one side," said he, "we have *debtor* by loss, one hundred millions of money. On the other, *creditor* by loss, one hundred thousand men; thirteen American provinces; an annual revenue of four millions, five hundred thousand pounds; five West India Islands; besides Florida and Minorca." This picture, addressed strongly to the imagination and the passions, highly coloured, was likewise false or exaggerated. St. Christopher's, one of the islands which he included in his list of losses, founding his assertion on false intelligence industriously propagated, had not been captured by the enemy. New York, as well as Charles Town, were held by our forces, and might form objects of cession, or negotiation. St. Lucia and Pondicherry, — one the key of the West India chain of islands; the other, valuable as being the capital of the French establishments on the Coromandel coast; — had both been subjected by our arms, and were in our possession. But these facts or considerations were wholly overlooked in a moment of national and ministerial depression. Then diverging with his characteristic impetuosity to Lord North's declaration of the preceding evening, that "he would not resign till he could do it with gratitude to the sovereign and to the public;" Burke exclaimed, "The noble lord's *gratitude*! Oh! Mr. Speaker, it resembles that of another fallen angel like himself,

"The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burthensome, still paying, still to owe."

Fox, on his part, attacked the minister with no less animosity, and declared that all the acts of his administration were founded in systematic delusion, sheltered by obscurity, and stamped with ignorance. He added, that "as the parting proof of the noble lord's *gratitude*, when Jamaica and Barbadoes, our only remaining settlements of value, were lost, it might be presumed he would think of retiring from office." No reply was made from the treasury bench, to such declamatory charges, calculated for sustaining and inflaming the general fermentation.

[8th March.] Unable nevertheless to effect Lord North's removal, or to provoke his voluntary resignation, by any censures passed on the conduct of the

American war, or by any interdictions of its future prosecution; the opposition became of necessity compelled to bring forward a personal question, inculcating administration. And it must be allowed, that in conducting this measure, they proceeded with judicious, as well as with cautious steps. A retrograde movement, or an unsuccessful attempt, they were well aware, would at once undo all that had hitherto been effected. Lord North, who was individually beloved in, and out of the house, even by those who most disapproved or opposed many of his measures; was likewise steadily supported by the sovereign: while in the House of Lords, no prospect of any defection or change had hitherto manifested itself. The session moreover advanced rapidly; and if Easter arrived, experience had proved that a full attendance could not be obtained after that period of the year, except with the utmost difficulty. All these facts having been maturely considered in the meetings which took place among the opposition leaders, they determined to try the temper of the House of Commons, without delay. Lord John Cavendish, seconded by Powis, introduced various resolutions, finally imputing the misfortunes of the war, to the "want of foresight and ability" in ministers. After a very long debate, in a crowded house, the administration not venturing directly to negative the proposition, yet found themselves unable to carry the motion, though only for the *order of the day*, by a greater majority than *ten*.

Of Lord John's speech, no trace remains on my mind; but Powis's address to the house was calculated to produce the deepest impression. He was indeed a man of great parliamentary talents, and of distinguished integrity, though by no means unaccompanied with deep ambition. For, from 1782, till 1797, during fifteen years, he seems, under successive administrations, never for an instant to have lost sight of the peerage to which he ultimately attained. After disclaiming all personal ill will against ministers, he adverted to Lord North's recent declaration, that whenever parliament should withdraw from him its confidence, he would then retire. "That period," said Powis, "is arrived! Par-

liament has withdrawn its confidence from the noble lord. The fetters which this house has imposed on him, constitute the strongest proof of the fact. He has likewise asserted, that he only continued in office, with a view to prevent confusion. But who are the *men* likely to succeed him, and what are the *principles* to which they stand pledged? Their first pledge is, to check profusion and prodigality in the expenditure of public money. Their second engagement is, to explore the dark recesses of the civil list, and to introduce retrenchment into that *sanctum sanctorum* of government. Lastly, they have solemnly promised to adopt some plan for improving the national representation within these walls: not, indeed, visionary plans: but, such as may tend to diminish, if not to eradicate the causes of parliamentary venality. Such are the *men*, from whom the chancellor of the exchequer pretends to apprehend confusion! Men, among whom are to be found the descendants of the most illustrious families, possessed of the largest property, distinguished by the most splendid talents. Among them is the admired son of a statesman, who carried the British name and arms to the summit of glory; and who only quitted his situation, when he discovered, that *a baneful, but secret influence, prevented him, either with honour to himself, or with advantage to the state, from carrying into execution those counsels, which he was no longer permitted to direct.* Yet from such men does the noble lord anticipate confusion!"

After touching with the hand of a master these great political keys, while the house listened in silence, Powis drew, in the same able manner, the contrast presented by ministers, when compared with the principal individuals constituting *opposition*. Commencing his delineation with the new secretary of state, who sat opposite to him, "that right honorable gentleman," observed he "gives us no encouragement to hope that such measures will emanate from his department, as can be beneficial to the country. He has presented us a sketch of his *creed*: but I cannot denominate it a sincere profession of *faith*. At best, I regard it only as an act of

occasional conformity. He has retracted no error. He has abjured no former principle, though he may have yielded somewhat to the feelings of the times. Once we remember him loud in declaiming on this side of the house; but he is now sunk into ministerial dependency. All the starch and the buckram of his composition is dissolved, and he seems reduced to a state of complete pliability. The noble lord in the blue ribband, is formed of the same ductile materials. Destitute of any system of action, *impelled by a secret, concealed influence*, he submits to adopt the principles of others. He now stands in a predicament altogether without example, having lost the confidence of parliament. What stronger proof of it than those already exhibited, does he demand?" Proceeding to delineate in the same caustic and contumelious, or invidious colours, the remaining members of the cabinet, he concluded by a forcible appeal to the gentlemen of landed property, representatives of counties or of cities. "Would they," he asked, "continue to support an administration, which had ruined their country; while order, regularity, and success, might justly be expected to arise from the exertions of the men who must succeed them in power?" The secretary at war now rose,—for the occasion fully called on him to come forward in so desperate a ministerial emergency. Within the compass of a few periods, he compressed almost every fact or argument which could be adduced, in justification of his colleagues. Never, indeed, did Jenkinson abuse the patience of his audience, or lose sight of the principal object for which he presented himself to notice, by flights of fancy, or digressions of imagination. He admitted that the war had been unsuccessful, but he denied that its principle was unjust. "Great power," he observed, "necessarily produces envy. Our splendid successes during the last contest with the two branches of the House of Bourbon, had raised us so high that those powers now eagerly seized the occasion to humble us. Hence, too, we were without allies. The monarchies of Austria and of France had, each in turn, suffered the same depression from similar causes. But were ministers on that account criminal? With-

out attempting, therefore, to negative facts which were undeniable, he would move the *order of the day.*"

At greater length, though with no less ability, Ellis addressed the house. In reply to Powis's charge of subservient pliability, the secretary of state remarked that there existed no strong temptations to induce him to covet his new office. "When I accepted the seal," said he, "I was possessed of a lucrative employment, to which no responsibility attached. I was undoubtedly in a warm, comfortable bed, out of which I have been summoned to take an active part in the ship of state, assailed by storm and tempest. I find myself now in a place of responsibility, by no means unaccompanied with danger. When these circumstances are duly weighed, gentlemen will find little cause to accuse me of such excessive pliability." The occasion was too favourable for Burke to lose. Starting up as soon as the secretary had finished, he attacked the new minister with those shafts of classic wit, satire, and ridicule, which he knew so well how to launce against his opponents. Shakspeare, as well as Milton, was ever ready at his call. "It was true," he allowed, "that the treasurer of the navy had quitted a warm bed, with his eyes hardly open; and ventured into a vessel, leaky, foundering, and tossed by tempestuous winds."—"He has been most unwise so to do; and to him I may apply the words of Brutus, when he asks his wife,

'Wherefore rise you now?

It is not for your health, thus to commit

Your weak condition to the raw cold morning.'

The right honorable secretary declares that he has left a warm bed for a post of danger. In my firm belief, it has been left merely with the intention of introducing a *Scotch warming pan.*" The allusion to Dundas, which was too palpable to be mistaken, excited no little laughter; and received, in the course of the evening, a most appropriate reply. Burke, proceeding in his career of sarcasm, answered Ellis under the triple character of a lawyer, a physician, and a divine; in each of which capacities he asserted that the secretary had spoken.

Nor, when tired of oppressing him under tropes and metaphors, did Burke fail to adduce more solid arguments in support of the motion, derived from the expenses, the disgraces, and the calamities of so many transatlantic campaigns. Far from being abandoned, however, on that night by the country gentlemen, various of them stepped forward to the support of a first minister, who had in fact committed no fault, except attempting to subject an insurgent people, placed at a remote distance from Great Britain. Sir John Delaval, Sir Harry Hoghton, Lord Nugent, Sir Edward Deering, all professed that the support which they extended to administration, arose from their conviction that the cabinet, however unfortunate, "wanted neither foresight nor ability."

Among the most able defenders of ministry in 1782, might be justly accounted Mr. Adam, who then held the post of treasurer of the ordnance. His duel with Fox, when added to his parliamentary eloquence, and the vigour of his character, had already acquired him no ordinary celebrity. From no individual in the house did Fox indeed experience so personal, and probably so painful an attack, in the course of the present debate, as from Adam. Reminding Fox of his assertion made on a former occasion, while addressing the house, that "the man, who on coming into office, should forget or renounce his early political principles, would be infamous;" Adam implored parliament to pause before they called into power a person professing tenets repugnant to, or subversive of, the British Constitution. As the best proof of the justice of his allegations, he charged the honorable member with having more than once declared, that "*the sense of the people was to be collected without doors, from the people themselves, and not from their representatives.*" Nor was this the only sentiment calculated to produce confusion, held and recommended by him. Two others, equally opposed to the wisdom of our ancestors, had been avowed from the same authority. He had professed himself "*an advocate for annual parliaments*, and he had expressed his desire to *alter the representation of the people.*" Burke, on his

part, stood pledged to *reduce the civil list*. And Adam then asked, "what national concord or unanimity we could reasonably expect, if men professing such principles should seize on the government, at a moment when general harmony was universally admitted to be indispensable for our extrication and preservation?"

It is probable that Fox, like other demagogues who have made their way up to power, in free states, by mounting on the shoulders of the people, and professing opinions calculated to gain popular favour; would gladly, when he had attained his object, have turned his back upon the ladder which facilitated his ascent. Not that I believe he cherished any principles inimical to constitutional freedom: but, poverty and ambition combining in the same individual, naturally produce asperity of language; and he had remained more than seven years excluded from office. Even now, though apparently near his prey, it might still elude his grasp. We must likewise recollect, that if ever there was a time in the modern history of this country, when reform seemed to be universally demanded, it was towards the close of the American war; when our humiliation, our losses, and our critical position, surrounded by enemies, inflamed the minds of men against a government, which had produced so much calamity. Pressed therefore by Adam, Fox rose; and as Welbore Ellishad done on a former night, made his reluctant political profession of faith. He did it in that manly, open manner, characteristic of his mind, which disdained reserve, and might rather be accused of inconsistency or imprudence, than of duplicity or disguise; artifices foreign to his nature. "Two leading principles," he said, "in which he differed from ministers, were the prosecution of the American war, and the influence of the crown. The general principle of reducing that influence, he strenuously approved. The corruption of the House of Commons had become intolerable; and to all the resolutions for excluding contractors, members of the board of trade, and of the green cloth, he gave his cordial assent. If placemen and contractors were subducted from the late division

respecting the American war, when ministers had remained in a minority of *nineteen*; the majority against administration would exceed a *hundred* on that question. "To all the details," continued Fox, "prepared for the reduction of influence, I do not subscribe: but I maintain that this assembly ought to be made *the representative of the nation*. I likewise think that the duration of parliament ought to be *shortened*, but I admit that it is a point on which honest men may differ. I am however of opinion that *annual* or *triennial* parliaments would be calculated to preserve the privileges of the people from the encroachments of the royal prerogative, and therefore would form an amelioration of the Constitution."

Having thus answered Mr. Adam's queries, though without noticing specifically the idea of introducing an alteration into the representation of the people; he diverged to another point of a very interesting, because, of a personal nature. "It has been asserted," said he, "that an *administration of proscription* is to be formed. I deny positively the fact. *I have only declared that I can form no connexion with the present cabinet; and that if I do, I shall be infamous*. But it is the desire of those with whom I have the honour to act, to collect all the ability, talents, and consideration of the country, and to employ this body of national strength, for the deliverance of the empire. I hope we may soon behold an administration settled on a broad basis, in which confidence may be justly reposed: it is however only by driving the present weak and wicked advisers of the crown, from about his majesty's person, that Great Britain can ever hope to recover from her actual disgraces and misfortunes." Such were nearly Fox's expressions on that memorable evening. The lord advocate of Scotland, who always knew when to interpose with the greatest effect in debate, and who waited to answer the opposition leader; instantly rising, began nevertheless by directing his discourse in the first instance, not to Fox, but to Burke. "The honorable member," observed Dundas, "whose classic redundancy of wit always charms this audience, has been

pleased, when addressing the secretary of state near me, to mention his quitting a snug, warm bed, in order to make room for a *Scotch warming pan*. Now I see no reason, when I look at the gentlemen opposite me, if their eager expectations of coming into power are fulfilled why it should not be an *Irish warming pan* which is to be introduced into that bed." A retort so apposite, turned the laugh against Burke. In fact, scarcely three weeks elapsed, before Barré was made treasurer of the navy. Having professed his inability to comprehend how a broad bottomed administration, such as Fox pretended to desire, could ever be formed, which must proscribe half the ability of the empire, the lord advocate called on him to explain more intelligibly his meaning. Then pushing the inquiries, which Adam had commenced, to a greater length, he demanded, "if Fox should come into office, and should find himself left in a minority on any of his popular or patriotic questions; whether it was his intention in such case, to avail himself of the right which he had frequently maintained? Did he mean to appeal from that house to the people? Would he resort to his other parliament convened in Westminster Hall, or in Palace Yard, and complain of the parliament sitting within those walls? Would he tell the people that they were betrayed; and induce them, like certain associations which of late years had been formed, to adopt resolutions, calculated to operate as a control upon the House of Commons?" To these questions he demanded a reply.

Under so embarrassing a load of inquiries on subjects so delicate, Fox delivered his opinion with great ability; neither abandoning his former professions, nor yet maintaining them in all their force. Relative to the administration which might be formed, he declared that "they would proscribe no individuals, of whatever principles, *except the five or six confidential advisers of the crown, who had produced the actual calamities of the country*. They did not mean to proscribe the learned lord himself, however strong they might reprobate his constitutional principles. With regard to the people without

doors, he conceived that *they possessed a right to declare their opinion of men and things; in order to do which, they might meet and consult together, provided they did it in a peaceable, orderly manner.*" "I will further add," continued he, "that whenever this house shall become lost to all sense of public duty, so sunk in corruption as to abandon the rights of the people, and to become the passive instruments of the crown; *then it may be justifiable to revert to the original principles of the Constitution, and to resume the direction of their own affairs, so that the popular weight may be preserved in the scale of government.* The present administration is the first since the revolution, which has dared to deny this right." Perhaps, in Fox's position, no words more judicious, or less exceptionable, could easily have been found. Nevertheless, Sheridan, who manifested on many occasions a sounder judgment than his friend, and who beheld in full view the promised land of power from which the party had been so long excluded; apprehensive that Fox's expressions might appear rather those of a *tribune*, than becoming a man who now aspired to *consular* offices and dignities; presented himself to the house. Directing his discourse pointedly to Dundas, he demanded of the learned lord, whether, because his honorable friend had maintained the *right* of an appeal, under certain circumstances, to the people, he could be suspected of ever exercising it, when he should become a minister? Did no obvious distinction exist, between a private member of parliament applying to his constituents, and a confidential servant of the sovereign, holding an office at his majesty's pleasure, appealing to the people in that capacity, against parliament? "No!" added he, "were my honorable friend in the noble lord's place, and should he even forfeit the confidence of parliament, *he* would neither fly to the people, nor to the throne for support. *He* would not cling with the convulsive grasp of despair to the helm which he could no longer conduct. *He* would follow the advice given by that learned lord himself, to a late minister. *He* would instantly retire;—not, indeed, probably to another assem-

bly, but to a situation more honorable in the hearts of the people."

Lord North rose when Sheridan sat down, and replied with his accustomed ability; though as I thought, not with all his usual animation; but the feature of the debate, which attracted universal attention towards its close, was the declaration made by Pitt. After holding up the first minister to condemnation under various points of view; and observing that a change of administration presented the only chance for national extrication; he subjoined, "It is not for me to say, nor for this house to dictate who may be the persons chosen to fill the offices under a new administration. All that I feel myself compelled to declare, is, *that I cannot expect to take any share in it: and even if the attainment of such an object were within my reach, I never will accept of a subordinate situation.*" These words, which undoubtedly had been well weighed before they were pronounced; disclosed without disguise, not only the elevation of his views, and the well founded confidence that he reposed in his own talents; but likewise his perfect independence of the two leaders, whose followers were now preparing to storm the cabinet, side by side. He served indeed, in their camp, as a volunteer, and auxiliary, though without looking up either to the Marquis of Rockingham, or to the Earl of Shelburne, for immediate advancement. Relying with reason, solely on his personal abilities, aided by patience, judgment, and the nature of the times; he doubtless anticipated at no remote period, his attainment of every object of well regulated ambition. The division did not take place till a very late hour; and the majority in favour of ministers was so small, that a desertion of only *six* individuals from the government side to that of opposition, would have left the whole cabinet at the mercy of their adversaries. Yet, as only four hundred and forty-six members voted on the question, even including the four *tellers*; and as consequently one hundred and eleven were absent, many of whom might probably attend on a future evening, sanguine expectations were entertained by both parties. It might indeed have been supposed that a government which rested

on so precarious a basis, was already virtually at an end. But Lord North gave the best indication, as it was considered, of his own intention to remain in office by proposing only three days afterwards, the new taxes which he meant to impose for the service of the year. The contending parties, therefore, prepared for fresh struggles; and from every part of the kingdom, as well as from foreign courts, attendance was procured. The duration of the ministry being now evidently at issue, and probably about to be decided in a very short time, not exceeding three weeks; it is difficult to convey an idea of the anxiety which agitated the court, the capital, and the country.

[15th March.] On the last debate which preceded Lord North's resignation, Sir John Rous moved to declare, that "the house had no farther confidence in ministers." The opposition imagined that if this motion was carried, no administration would venture to continue in office; or if they should be bold enough to defy the indignation of parliament, the same majority would, it was presumed, next address the crown for their removal. There then remained only one step more to impeachment. But so equally balanced were the two sides, that though four hundred and sixty-seven members, including the tellers, voted on the division, scarcely any ground was lost or gained. Government still remained in a majority of *nine*, thus losing *one* since the preceding debate. Yet, even that single vote being in favour of the opposition, in so full a house, seemed to indicate that they were progressive in the public esteem. In fact, twenty-one members more voted on this, than on the preceding division. Among the interesting features of the debate, must be accounted the appearance of Mr. George Onslow on the scene. He was one of the two representatives for the town of Guilford, and a man of much eccentricity, as well as irregularity of deportment. He seldom spoke; but his speeches, if they did not abound in wit, were marked by great freedom of language and opinion. Without circumlocution of any kind, he accused the opposition leaders, as the principal instruments in dissevering America from her allegi-

ance to Great Britain. "General Washington's army," exclaimed he, "has been called by members of this house, *our army*; and the cause of the rebels has been denominated the cause of *freedom*. Every support has been given the Americans, who have placed their confidence on the encouragement extended to them within these walls. Franklin and Laurens are here made the subject of daily panegyric; and the weak parts of our interior government have been exposed or pointed out to the rebels. *It has even been reported, and I believe it is true, that information has been transmitted from hence to the court of Versailles.*"

A loud cry arising from the opposition benches, calling on him to name the individuals to whom he alluded, Onslow declined compliance; adding, that "he could not tell: or, if he could, he would not; but that he retained his conviction of its truth." He concluded by declaring his belief that the ill success of a war, in the principle of which almost the whole nation concurred at its commencement, might be with reason ascribed to those persons, who had not scrupled uniformly to avow, that they should deeply lament its being crowned with fortunate results. Lord North himself might be said to give some countenance to these assertions or accusations of Onslow:—for, in the course of a long and masterly appeal to the house, some parts of which he pronounced with evident emotion, he observed, that "far from feeling either the contrition or the repentance for the acts of his past administration, which gentlemen opposite asserted would become him, he experienced, on the contrary, the most perfect calm, arising from the consciousness of not having done any wrong." "If, indeed," continued he, "in any of my speeches in this house, or in any which I have made out of doors, or in any part of my conduct, *I had held out hopes to the Americans that they possessed friends in this country, professing to be their advocates, and who embraced every occasion to advance their interests, in preference to those of their native country,—then, I confess, I should think I had acted in a manner that called for deep contrition and sincere repentance: nay, even for humiliation, for self-*

abasement, and for shame." He could not more clearly designate, nor reprobate in stronger terms, the line of conduct adopted by the chiefs of opposition, throughout the whole progress of the American contest.

Reverting next to the conduct of that war, "I deny," said he, "that its commencement is in any degree to be attributed to his majesty's present ministers. The Stamp Act was repealed, and the Declaratory Act had passed, before I was called to the cabinet, though I voted for them both, as a private member of parliament. I came into office at a moment of crisis, *when others had deserted the helm*, and I have exerted my best endeavours to serve my country." His allusion to the manner in which the Duke of Grafton abandoned the reins of government, was rendered more striking by the circumstance of that nobleman's accepting the privy seal under the new administration, only a few days afterwards. When Lord North came to speak of the misrepresentations which he was accused of using, with a view to persuade parliament to the prosecution of hostilities for so many unfortunate campaigns; and particularly, with declaring that we had numerous friends in America; he spoke under visible embarrassment. It became requisite, in order to exculpate himself, that he should inculcate his late colleague, Lord Sackville; nor did he hesitate so to do. "*The declaration in question*," observed he, "*came not from me, but from another minister*. It fell not, indeed, within the range of my department, to receive such official information. Not that I doubted it; for I am convinced that the minister who made the assertion spoke from good authority. I believe we not only had, but that we still retain, numerous friends throughout the colonies. *I confess, at the same time, that I never thought those friends sufficient in point of numbers, nor in any point of view whatever, either to justify our commencing, or our continuing the war, solely on their account*." These significant expressions undraw in a considerable degree the veil from before the cabinet; and like Don Cleofas, in the "*Diable Boiteux*," we are admitted behind the scenes. How

far the first minister acted with his accustomed prudence or elevation of mind, in making such an avowal, in such a place, posterity will best decide. His position, still in office, and intending, as he asserted, to remain at the head of his majesty's councils, unless driven out by a vote of the House of Commons, was in itself most painful and delicate. Probably he thought, by sacrificing in some measure a member of the cabinet who was now no longer in office, and who had reached the upper house, he might conciliate his enemies. But in his accusation of the late American secretary, he virtually enveloped his sovereign in the same charge. Fox's opinion of it may be collected from his own comments, when he replied to Lord North. "Up to this day," said he, "I always considered the noble lord to have acted generously by his colleagues, as he uniformly professed to share in their guilt, whatever might be its extent. But on the present evening, he throws the responsibility and the blame on another minister, for having deceived us by erroneous or exaggerated accounts, respecting the number of our adherents beyond the Atlantic. The noble lord has, however, himself, deluded and deceived parliament, in a variety of instances."

The conclusion of the first minister's speech was unusually pathetic, as well as interesting. I sat near him, and his words were well calculated to remain engraven on the memory. It is, indeed, probable, whatever assurances he might give to the king, or to his friends and adherents, that he nevertheless considered himself as near his political extinction. "My wish," exclaimed he, "is not only for peace, but for an administration that may act with unanimity and effect towards the general safety! *I will not form any obstacle to a coalition, in which I shall have no share or place*. There are indeed those who well know that for some years past, I have been ready and willing to make way for such an administration: nor is it owing to any personal desire of mine, that I have so long remained in my situation. *I declare to God, that no love of office or of emolument, should detain me for a moment in place, if I could with honour*

leave it; and if certain circumstances, which I cannot now explain, did not prevent my resignation! A time may come, when I can better speak upon this point. I act in obedience to a sense of duty, and neither advice nor menaces can influence me to abandon it. Never will I subscribe to the idea, that provided ministers will only quit their places, punishment shall not follow. I neither desire to avoid censure nor punishment. My only demand is, that the proofs of *neglect*, or of *guilt*, may be established against ministers, before *censure* is voted. If we deserve *censure*, it ought to be followed by *punishment*." It is impossible not to suppose that "the circumstances" to which Lord North so pointedly alluded, but "which he could not explain;" were the solicitations of his sovereign not to desert him, as had been done by his ministerial predecessors, Lord Bute, and the Duke of Grafton. There were passages in this speech, which reminded me of Wolsey's language to Cromwell, when he says,

———"I feel within me
A peace above all earthly dignities;
A still and quiet conscience."——
———"I am able now, methinks,
(Out of a fortitude of soul I feel.)
To endure more miseries, and greater far,
Than my weak-hearted enemies dare offer."

Indeed, so much did Lord North feel the degree of similitude between his own situation and the fall of Wolsey; that, adopting the expression of the cardinal, when one of his friends waited on him a few days afterwards, to offer his condolences, accompanied with some marks of surprise, at his resignation; he answered, with the utmost good humour and complacency, in Shakspeare's words,

"What, amazed
At my misfortunes?—Can thy spirit wonder
A great man should decline?"

So much did his constitutional suavity and amenity of character, enable him to surmount every vicissitude of fortune! And so naturally did his improved and classic mind suggest to him, the historic images analogous to his situation!

Fox, in his reply on that night,—for he would allow no person to answer the minister, except himself;—made some

observations tinged with more severity, than his placable nature usually dictated to him. Only four days earlier, having indulged in similar remarks upon Lord North, when he laid before the house his proposed taxes for the year; Fox, either conscious that he had trespassed beyond the bounds of liberality, or impelled by his own generous character, made the chancellor of the exchequer an ample and a voluntary apology. "I do assure the noble lord," said he, "that in all I have stated on the present occasion, or at any former time, I meant not to press upon him, to goad him, or to run him down. Still less is it my intention to say any thing that should hurt his mind, or give him uneasiness. Upon my honour, I nourish no such design; and though I neither ask pardon of the chairman, nor of the committee, for any expression that I may have used, yet I ask pardon of the noble lord if I have offended him;—for I meant it not. We cannot help admiring a man who united such a disposition, with talents so pre-eminent. Pitt, however superior he was to Fox in judgment, and in various other respects, wanted that noble, winning, and open spirit, which conciliated so many friends, and retained them in defiance of adversity, poverty, or exclusion from power. In the course of the present debate, which may be considered as the last that took place previous to Lord North's surrender, various members of the house rose, to attack, or to defend him. Sir William Dolben not only voted with him, but pronounced an affecting encomium on his integrity, honour, and domestic virtues; from which no individual had attempted to detract, and to which so many had borne testimony. Having expressed his anxious wishes, that a coalition might yet be formed between the noble lord and his principal opponents, seated on the opposite benches; he added, "If nevertheless a change should take place, to the total exclusion of the present first minister, either in consequence of a vote of this house, or from his own spontaneous movement; I am persuaded that he will exhibit a phenomenon to this country; namely, *a minister out of office, supporting the government that expelled him, instead of opposing,*

thwarting, and embarrassing their measures." The lord advocate did not abandon his principal, but sustained him with eloquence and ability "A union of parties," he admitted, "seemed to be not only the general wish, but coincided with his own individual opinion. It was however to be effected by the substantial connection of both sides, not by putting the government exclusively into the hands of opposition. The noble lord in the blue ribband had declared his readiness to facilitate such a coalition, and that he would not stand in the way of its accomplishment."

Indignant at the idea of Lord North's attempting to capitulate, to protract, or to make any conditions before he laid down his employments; Pitt rose to answer Dundas. His speech, though not long, breathed the most determined hostility, couched in language of no ordinary warmth. Reprobating the proposition itself as an insult to parliament, not deserving an instant's attention, he said he thanked God that an end was likely to be put to the present government; but he trusted the house would not contaminate its own purpose, by allowing ministers to manage the appointment of their successors. It neither was the province of that house to settle the *men* who were to succeed, nor to indicate the *measures* proper to be pursued. "I ask pardon," concluded he, "of this assembly, if I have delivered myself with too much heat; but I cannot help feeling for my country under the distressful situation of being governed by ministers, who manifest neither sensibility nor shame; and who are as devoid of feeling, as of every other quality of statesmen." To these bitter and humiliating reproaches, no answer was attempted from the treasury bench, though the new American secretary spoke for a few minutes, to an impatient audience loudly demanding the question. Its result, when notified, inspired the opposition with new energy, in the same degree that it spread dismay over the ministerial benches. Fox gave immediate intimation to his friends of a motion similar in its import, for the following Wednesday; which notice he reiterated in the house on the subsequent day. Among the members

who voted with Lord North on the two last divisions, of the 8th and the 15th of March, I must not omit *Gibbon*, the celebrated historian. He had likewise supported administration on General Conway's second motion for terminating the American war, when government was left in a minority of nineteen. Gibbon then sat in parliament as one of the members for Lymington, and attended constantly on great questions; but I believe he never attempted to address the house. *Addison* had not displayed any parliamentary talents, though he occupied the high office of secretary of state for a short time. We know that *Johnson* was anxious to obtain a seat in the House of Commons, with a view of sustaining Lord North by his eloquence. We may, however, seasonably doubt whether, notwithstanding his gigantic abilities, he would have succeeded better on that theatre, than his *Irene* did at Drury Lane. Oratory appears to have no connection with historical, poetical, or philological capacity.

Every artifice of party was used by the opposition, to encourage their friends, and to terrify, or hold out to popular odium, the adherents of administration. Lists were published, and disseminated throughout the kingdom, containing the names of the members who voted on each question; those voting on the side of government being printed in *red* letters, while the names of the minority appeared in *black* type. Unimportant or contemptible as this circumstance may appear, it produced nevertheless a powerful effect on weak, or timid individuals; and bore some faint resemblance to the proceedings of the memorable parliament which met in 1640. under Charles the First. Lord North appeared likewise to entertain strong apprehensions respecting the consequences, which might ultimately result to the king, if not to himself, from the struggle in which ministers were engaged. It was generally believed that he had stated these fears to his majesty with so much earnestness, and had so warmly depicted the painful situation in which the sovereign might be personally involved, if his cabinet should be taken by storm; as to have obtained the royal permission for negotiating, and even surrendering on

terms. His expressions in the last debate, which intimated his readiness or disposition to withdraw from office, and not to form any impediment, if a coalition could be formed for carrying on the public service; seemed fully to justify the belief, that he was authorized to make such propositions. They were, however, treated with affected ridicule or scorn, by his opponents, both in, and out of the house; as only calculated for purposes of delusion, in order to weaken or distract their efforts. Far from listening to any overtures of accommodation, they anticipated a certain triumph. Never were moments more precious, or more critical. It being well known that the House of Commons would, according to regular usage, adjourn on the 28th of March, for ten or eleven days, till after the Easter holidays, which in that year happened to fall early; Lord North consequently might calculate almost the number of hours that he had to hold out against his assailants:—for, no sanguine expectation of successfully renewing their attack upon ministry, after the recess, could be entertained by the opposition. Every effort, therefore, it was evident, must necessarily be wound up within a week or two, and government made the strongest demonstrations of abiding the issue.

[16th—19th March.] In all the departments, positive assurances were given, that no compromise or resignation was intended. Robinson protested the same thing to me, at his house in St. James's square; the same which is now occupied by Lord Castlereagh; and to which splendid residence Robinson had only recently removed, from a small house in Parliament street. Lord North himself, whatever fluctuations of mind he might internally undergo, personally reiterated those declarations to his nearest political connexions. On the 18th of March, Monday, he came down to the House of Commons; spoke in reply to Sir Edward Astley, on the subject of some tax bill, then on its passage through parliament; and displayed all his characteristic good humour, mingled with gaiety. No man on either side of the house, doubted the firmness of the sovereign, or suspected him of abandoning his ministers from personal timidity.

Each party therefore prepared to try their force, and both expressed themselves confident of success. I can assert, however, from the best authority, that if the contest had been maintained, it would, according to every probability, have terminated numerically in favour of administration. Robinson, then secretary of the treasury, and who knew better than any man, the secret of affairs, has many times assured me, that government would have infallibly divided *from fourteen to twenty* majority, on the day when Lord North resigned; Robinson having received the written assurances of attendance and support, from many members who were absent on the last question. Even various of the country gentlemen who had hitherto voted with opposition, hesitated, or refused, to push the struggle to the utmost extremity. They had put an end to the American war, which they reprobated; and they wished for a change of men, as well as of measures, and of systems: but they wished it with moderation, and were averse to using the last expedients which the British Constitution admits, lest the Constitution, or the state itself, should suffer in the shock.

[20th March.] On the other hand, I know from authentic channels of information, that Lord North, during the last four months of his continuance in office, repeatedly tendered his resignation to the king; which his majesty as often declined, accompanying his refusal with the most gracious and encouraging expressions. On Tuesday, the 19th of March, the first minister, apprehensive of the event of the debate which was fixed for the ensuing day, in the House of Commons, wrote to the king in the most decided terms, resigning his employment; and his majesty being down at Windsor, Lord North despatched a messenger with the letter. When it arrived, the king was going out to hunt: having perused its contents, for which he was probably not unprepared, he calmly put it into his pocket, made no observation, and mounted his horse. But, he had not proceeded more than a few paces, when a page came running after him, to say that Lord North's messenger had received orders to bring back a reply. "Tell him," said the king, "that I shall be in town to-morrow

morning, and will then give Lord North an answer." Two noblemen were with him at the time, one of whom was the late Duke of Dorset: the other, Lord Hinchinbrook (afterwards Earl of Sandwich), related to me these particulars. Turning immediately to them, — "Lord North," observed his majesty, "has sent me in his resignation; but I shall not accept it." If, however, the king was apprized of Lord North's intention or determination to resign, it was by no means known in London; and on the morning of the very day, I believe that few individuals of either party entertained a doubt of the continuance of the struggle. Still less did any person conceive, that the first minister would spontaneously lay down his office, without giving notice to his friends, and contrary to his own recent professions. He went soon after one o'clock, to the treasury, from whence he was to repair to St. James's, where the king, as usual, had a levee. Robinson told me, that previous to his quitting the treasury chambers, they held a long conversation together; in the course of which, he showed Lord North, on paper, the names of those members who had promised to support him on the ensuing question, to the number of nine, ten, or eleven, at least; not one of whom had been present in the preceding division. And he did not, himself, entertain the slightest suspicion of the first minister's resignation; from whom he received the most satisfactory assurances of his intention, in every case, to abide the issue of the approaching debate. After standing together at the fire in the board-room, till Lord North's carriage drew up, they parted about ten minutes after two o'clock; the minister driving straight to St. James's, while the secretary, after despatching a variety of official business, repaired soon after four o'clock, to the House of Commons.

It is probable that the conversation which took place between the king and Lord North on that occasion, was never minutely reported by either, to any third person: but we may safely assume, that his majesty endeavoured to prevail on his minister not to abandon him. Robinson professed himself ignorant of all the particulars; though he entertained no

doubt that Lord North, whether from weariness and disgust, or apprehension of the consequences that might accrue to his sovereign, to himself, and to the country, had made up his mind as he drove to St. James's, to state at once to the king the determination that he had irrevocably embraced, of laying down immediately his power; a resolution which he had notified under his hand, on the preceding day. It is certain that the interview between them was long, lasting above an hour and a half, without any witness present; at the end of which time the minister withdrew, in order to attend the House of Commons. I have rarely witnessed so full an attendance, at so early an hour, as on that day; not less than four hundred members having taken their seats before four o'clock, both parties appearing impatient to proceed to business. The only delay arose from the absence of the first minister; and he being every instant expected to arrive from St. James's, all eyes were directed towards the door each time that it opened. The members on both sides, who, it was generally understood, would speak in the course of the ensuing debate, were well known; and as the ground of controversy had been so often gone over, as well as on account of many invalids who attended, and who were unable to remain long, it was thought that the question would be brought on before midnight.

At length Lord North, entering in a full dressed suit, his ribband over his coat, proceeded up the house, amidst the incessant cry of "order, and places." As soon as he had reached the treasury bench, he rose, and attempted to address the chair; but Lord Surrey, who had given notice of a motion for that day, being consequently in possession of the right to speak first, and having likewise risen, a clamour began from all quarters, of the most violent description. In the course of this scene of disorder, Pitt, Fox, and various other members spoke to the point of order or precedence; the opposition loudly demanding that Lord North should not be permitted to address the house, or to propose an adjournment, till the Earl of Surrey had been heard. The confusion lasted for some minutes, with more or less

violence, in defiance of every effort made by the speaker to enforce silence; until, in consequence of the earnestness with which the minister besought a hearing, and some expressions relative to the importance of the communication that he had to make, which pervaded the tumult; Fox having moved that "the Earl of Surrey do now speak," Lord North availed himself of that proposition, to obtain a priority. An instant silence succeeded to the late storm; and as he prepared to begin his discourse, it might have been truly asserted that

"his look
Drew audience and attention still as night."

After justifying himself from the imputation of having improperly occasioned the recent disorder, by the public notice given in the house, both of Lord Surrey's intended motion, and of its purport, he stated that he had come down on that day, in order to announce from authority, his majesty's determination to change his ministers. He should, himself, form no obstacle to that consummation; and he therefore conceived it unnecessary to debate a question which had for its object a removal already produced. Having then returned his acknowledgments to the house, for their long and steady support extended to him, he added: "A successor of greater abilities, of sounder judgment, and better qualified for his situation, it is easy to find. One more zealous for the glory and interests of his country, or more anxious to advance them; animated by more loyalty to his sovereign, or *more desirous to preserve the Constitution whole and inviolate*, may not be so easily found. The crown has determined on choosing new ministers; and I hope to God, whoever they may be, they will embrace such measures as may extricate us from our present difficulties, may render us happy at home, and successful abroad! I know that I am responsible for my public conduct, whenever my country calls on me to answer for it. I do assure this assembly that I shall not run away, nor will I avoid any enquiry which they may think proper to institute respecting me." He concluded by moving that the house should adjourn,

in order to allow his majesty time to make new ministerial arrangements. It is not easy to conceive the effect which this declaration produced in a popular assembly, scarcely an individual of which did not hear it with lively sentiments of exultation or of concern, both which emotions were heightened by surprise.

Fox having advised Lord Surrey not to withdraw, but to reserve his proposed motion, for the ensuing Monday, in case the minister's present declaration should not be fully and completely verified; observed, that whoever might be the persons called to the councils of the crown, he should hold them infamous if they abandoned their principles, on obtaining possession of power. He added, that as the house had now proved their abhorrence of a government of influence, the new ministers must ever bear in mind that fact, and remember that *to the house they owed their situations*. Rigby, who probably was more prepared for Lord North's resignation, than most other individuals present; after professing the highest respect for him, as a man and as a minister, yet admitted that "after the division of the preceding Friday, he was not only justified in laying down his office, but that he had, himself, advised the first lord of the treasury to retire. A majority of *nine*, opposed to a minority of *two hundred and twenty-seven*, which had grown out of the distresses of the country, in consequence of the war, must overbear any minister, let his abilities be ever so resplendent." "As for the new administration," continued he, "I hope it will be formed on a broad, solid basis; and I sincerely wish they may prove equal to extricating the country. It has been asserted that some men can make peace better than others, and that the Americans will more readily treat with gentlemen on one side of this house, than with those who occupy the opposite benches. *I shall be happy to find the prediction verified by the fact.*" These words were not forgotten, when it was ascertained how inefficient and unsuccessful Fox's attempts to open negotiations with Holland and America, subsequently proved.

Powis concurred with Fox, in exhorting Lord Surrey to suspend his motion for a few days; "but," added he,

“ if by Monday next, every atom of the present administration ; — *those ministers who are behind the curtain*, as well as the ostensible men ; — *the invisible as well as the visible agents*, who have so long governed, and precipitated to the verge of destruction, this country, are not swept away ; then I shall wish my noble friend to renew his motion.” The treasury bench observed a profound silence, neither Ellis, Dundas, nor Jenkinson pronouncing a single word throughout the course of the debate. But a species of dialogue or interlude was exclusively performed by Burke and General Conway, which lasted a considerable time ; each complimenting the other on the situation which, it was probable, they would respectively fill in the new order of things, under the government about to be formed. Burke, indeed, disclaimed having any such views or expectations ; while Conway contented himself with only declaring that “ whether he should be a minister, or a private member of parliament, he would always approve himself the determined enemy of corruption.” Affecting to moderate the tumultuous joy of his friends at this sudden change of affairs, Burke implored them “ to be calm ; and to remember that the ministers who were retiring, did not quit office in consequence of any address to the throne carried on that day. They were neither tired of occupying their situations, nor was the sovereign weary of them ; and therefore the great work just achieved, would prove incomplete. if the independent members, who had effected it, did not support the ministers whom they themselves had raised to power.”

Lord North did not however remain without testimonies to his public talents, integrity, and virtues, even on this day of his fall. Sir John Delaval expressed his high admiration of that nobleman’s great, as well as amiable qualities, and his regret that such abilities would now be lost to his country. Courtenay with great pertinacity and greater wit, addressed an audience which refused him a hearing ; and though he assured them that he was neither of a disposition, or temper, or nation, to be intimidated, yet his voice could not surmount the impatient exultation of the opposi-

tion benches. The tribute that he paid to the expiring minister, derived a peculiar zest, if I may so express myself, from the circumstance of Courtenay’s having always lamented the American war, as inexpedient, impolitic, and even unjust. Indeed he animadverted with no little severity, both on the country gentlemen who had originally propelled or encouraged the attempt of parliament to tax America ; and on the members seated opposite, whose clamorous and indecorous testimonies of satisfaction, overbore his voice ; humorously comparing the latter to *Nell* in the farce of “ *The Devil to Pay*,” when to her astonishment she wakes in *Lady Love-rule’s* bed. Lord Surrey at length rising, acquiesced sullenly and reluctantly in the advice of his friends to postpone his motion ; which act he however accompanied with a menace, that if any part of the administration should remain in office upon the following Monday, he would come forward with a motion of a very different nature, and far more personal to ministers. This declaration was received with loud cheers. The house now unanimously agreed to adjourn to the subsequent Monday, the 25th of the month ; and the members, actuated by very opposite emotions, dispersed in all directions, to spread the intelligence through the capital. A more interesting scene had not been acted within the walls of the House of Commons, since February 1741, when Sir Robert Walpole retired from power. Nor did the first minister of George the Second by any means display in the last moments of his political life, the equanimity, suavity, and dignity, manifested by his successor. Lord North ordered his coach to remain at the House of Commons in waiting, on that evening. In consequence of so unexpected an event as his resignation, and the house breaking up at such an early hour, the housekeeper’s room became crowded to the greatest degree ; few persons having directed their carriages to be ready before midnight. In the midst of this confusion, Lord North’s coach drove up to the door ; and as he prepared to get into it, he said, turning to those persons near him, with that unalterable good temper which never

forsook him, "Good night, gentlemen, you see what it is to be in the secret."

However extraordinary and unexpected Lord North's resignation appeared at the moment when it took place; and however certain I esteem it, that he would have carried the question, on the evening when he laid down his office, by a larger majority than had supported him on the preceding debate of the 15th; yet it must be admitted that he could assign, not only to himself, but to his sovereign, and to the country at large, many cogent, if not unanswerable reasons, for retiring from power. The nation, he well knew, was universally weary of a war, the misfortunes that had attended which, though originating in the very nature of the contest, and perhaps justly imputable to many other causes or persons, rather than to him, were attributed principally to his errors or mismanagement. He beheld himself now engaged in hostilities, direct or indirect, with half Europe, in addition to America. Ireland, availing itself of our embarrassments, loudly demanded commercial and political emancipation. On every side, the empire appeared to be crumbling into ruin. Minorca, long invested, had already surrendered, some weeks earlier, after a defence protracted to the last extremity. Gibraltar was closely besieged. In the East Indies, our difficulties, financial, as well as military, threatened the total subversion of our wide extended authority in that quarter of the globe; where Hyder Ally, though expelled by Sir Eyre Coote, from the vicinity of Madras, still maintained himself in the centre of the Carnatic. If the first minister looked to the West Indies, the prospect appeared still more big with alarm. St. Christopher's, attacked by the Marquis de Bouillé, might be hourly expected to surrender; and he had already recaptured St. Eustatius, either by surprise, or by corrupting the officer who commanded the garrison. Among all the chain of Caribbee Islands which had belonged to the crown of Great Britain at the commencement of the war, only Antigua and Barbadoes remained. Such was our maritime inferiority, that Sir Samuel Hood, whose abilities had been vigorously exerted at the head of the fleet, to

defend St. Christopher's, found himself unable to hazard an engagement with De Grasse. Rodney had indeed sailed from England, with a considerable reinforcement, in the month of January, to join the British admiral at Barbadoes. But Lord North could not foresee, nor did the most sanguine adherents of Lord Sandwich venture to predict, the splendid victory which Rodney obtained over De Grasse, scarcely more than three weeks after the resignation of the first minister. That naval triumph, which, if it had taken place sooner, might have saved the administration, only served to illustrate Lord Rockingham's short ministry.

Far from anticipating any such event, the most alarming apprehensions were entertained relative to the safety of Jamaica itself. If the combined fleets of France and Spain in the West Indies, after the reduction of St. Christopher's, should effect a junction, they would have exceeded fifty sail of the line; while Rodney's whole force scarcely amounted to more than thirty. And it was very doubtful whether such a junction could be prevented by any exertion of vigilance, courage, or skill. The loss of Jamaica would complete the measure of the national calamities, by involving our commerce and our finances in almost total ruin. Under such an accumulation of defeat and of disaster, the vengeance of the country might demand some victim; and the leaders of opposition, though neither sanguinary nor vindictive in their disposition, might be compelled to yield to the torrent of popular indignation. Fox, as well as Burke and Barré, had in fact many times alluded to the axe and the block, amongst the opprobrious epithets that they lavished on the ministerial errors; and such menaces might be realized in a moment of national depression or violence. The crown might be even unable to extend protection to its servants; and the scenes of the year 1641 might be renewed under the reign of George the Third. That this picture is not exaggerated, the history of the period which I am writing, sufficiently proves; and however exempt from personal pusillanimity or apprehension we may suppose Lord North to have been, it was

impossible that he could avert his view from these considerations, or not allow them their due weight over his mind. Though it seems to be indisputable that his final resolution to resign was at last somewhat suddenly embraced, yet the motives which led to it, had unquestion-

ably long existed, and may fully explain, as well as justify, his conduct.

The termination of Lord North's administration, and the close of the American war, form a great era in the reign of George the Third. Here, therefore, I shall finish the second part of these Memoirs.

PART THE THIRD.

1782. — [21st — 27th March.] Lord North's resignation, preceded at only a short interval of time, by that of Lord George Germain; and followed, as it was, by the dismissal of all the ministerial adherents in every department, with the single exception of the chancellor; were in themselves events of the first national magnitude and importance. Their impression was augmented by the sudden and unexpected declaration of the first lord of the treasury in the House of Commons, that "his majesty's ministers were no more," at a moment when the most vigorous resistance on their part was universally considered as certain. The younger portion of society scarcely remembered any other minister than Lord North; and Lord Sandwich had presided nearly as long at the head of the admiralty. To the king, the former of those noblemen was endeared by almost every personal quality or circumstance which could render him acceptable in the closet, as well as useful in his public capacity. More than twelve years of almost daily intercourse, amidst scenes of perpetual disquietude and alarm, had cemented by the effect of habit, the other motives for royal predilection. It may indeed be reasonably doubted, whether even Lord Bute's resignation affected the sovereign so deeply or so painfully, as Lord North's retreat. Mr. Grenville's administration was regarded by many persons, as a continuation of the preceding ministry, under another name; whereas in 1782, the king could only anticipate a complete surrender. The individuals, the measures, the reductions contemplated, accompanied with the total renunciation of sovereignty over the revolted colonies;

all were alike odious, or disagreeable to the king. No man who attentively considers these facts, will hesitate in believing that Lord North might probably have continued in power as long as Sir Robert Walpole had done, if the American war had not intervened and overturned him. Its duration, expense, calamities, and disgraces, became at length too overpowering to be surmounted by any human ability. However indisputable I consider the parliamentary *right* of legislation over the American colonies to have been; yet the attempt to *enforce* that right by arms; or, as Burke denominated it, "the experiment of shearing the wolf," should unquestionably have been renounced after the capitulation of Saratoga. From the instant that France and Spain, listening to the impulse of a narrow, vindictive policy, and oblivious of all considerations except those of animosity towards Great Britain, undertook to sustain by armies and fleets, the cause of insurrection; we ought to have abandoned the further prosecution of hostilities beyond the Atlantic. Probably, Lord North himself was not far removed from that opinion. We are at least in some measure warranted so to assume, from the tenor of his expressions in the House of Commons, when speaking on the subject, the last time that he rose as first minister, previous to his resignation. He yielded however to the majority of the cabinet, sustained by the wishes of the sovereign.

The votes of the 22d, and 27th of February, followed by that of the 4th of March, had, it is true, incapacitated the first minister for continuing war against America. But no reason existed to prevent him from negotiating as successfully

for the attainment of peace, as could be done by Lord Rockingham, or Lord Shelburne. He had declared his perfect readiness to obey the orders of parliament, though he disapproved, as a measure of policy, the resolutions proposed and carried by General Conway. Nay, he had directed the attorney general to bring in a bill for enabling his majesty to conclude a peace or truce with the revolted colonies; which proposition was actually made and adopted in a committee of the whole house, on the 5th of March, only fifteen days before his own resignation. Public opinion, however, seemed imperiously to demand a change of ministers, as well as of measures. Men, long accustomed to ill success, fondly imagined that they must benefit by the substitution of new names. Neither the health, nor the abilities of the Marquis of Rockingham, seemed, indeed, equal to sustaining the fatigues or the duties of government, at a period of such national depression. Towards the Earl of Shelburne, it is true that all eyes were directed, as a nobleman whose talents and information were peculiarly adapted to the critical emergency of public affairs. Nor can we doubt, that if a cordial union and co-operation could have been effected between them and their respective adherents; an administration might have arisen, calculated to rescue the sovereign and the country from their state of distress. Fox and Burke acknowledged the *marquis* for their leader; while Dunning and Barré looked up to the *earl* for protection. Of these four distinguished persons, Fox only could in any degree be regarded as a free agent. Burke, having lost his seat at the last general election, as one of the representatives for the city of Bristol, owed to Lord Rockingham his present place in the House of Commons, being returned for *Malton*. *Calne* sent to parliament, both Dunning and Barré. Fox having not only succeeded in Westminster, but, being the only member competent to perform the active duties of the situation while his colleague Sir George Rodney was absent in the West Indies, might be considered as standing on a great eminence. If, to this circumstance we add his birth, his connexions, the energies of his character, and his splendid talents of

various kinds, he might doubtless have aspired to occupy in his own person, the offices left vacant by Lord North. Mr. Pelham, and George Grenville, who, under the late and present reign, had been placed at the head of the treasury and of the exchequer, were only younger brothers of noble families. But the state of destitution to which Fox had reduced himself, and the mode by which he had effected it, operated to depress him below the level on which nature had placed him. Pitt, though like Fox, he possessed little or no patrimonial fortune, yet became first minister; while Fox, with abilities equally eminent, never aspired beyond a second place in the government. The public voice, even under a sovereign of more relaxed morals than George the Third, would not, I am persuaded, have permitted him to be placed at the head of the finances. That place, it was evident, must be conferred on Lord Rockingham, or on Lord Shelburne. Those persons who looked below the surface, and who knew how little personal communication existed between the two noblemen in question, how dissimilar were their opinions on many great points of policy, and by what different adherents they were surrounded or impelled; argued most unfavourably relative to the concord and duration of a ministry, formed under their joint auspices.

The king, who upon every point was not less accurately informed than any of his subjects, finding himself abandoned by Lord North, as he had repeatedly been deserted at earlier periods of his reign, by other ministers, chose that evil which he esteemed to be the least in his situation. Well acquainted with the discordant materials of which the opposition was composed, he sent to Lord Shelburne, to signify a desire of conferring with him, on the formation of a new administration: and when that nobleman attended his majesty for the purpose, the king proposed to him to accept the place of first lord of the treasury. But Lord Shelburne, however disposed he might be from inclination, to comply with an offer so flattering to his ambition; felt too deeply conscious of his inability to maintain himself in power, independent of the

Rockingham party, to venture on its acceptance. Having stated therefore, the necessity under which he lay of declining so gratifying a distinction, at least for the present; he urged the overruling circumstances that no immediate alternative to the crown, except placing the Marquis of Rockingham at the head of the ministry. Sensible that he must submit to the measure, however painful, the king therefore, on the subsequent day, desired Lord Rockingham's attendance. At the audience which took place, his majesty consented to the conditions on which the marquis insisted, before he would agree to accept office; only attempting to stipulate as a preliminary, that two of his actual ministers, namely, the chancellor and Lord Stormont, should be continued under the new administration. He could not however obtain such terms; nor was it without some repugnance, and after considerable difficulty, that even Lord Thurlow was admitted to retain his situation. A decided negative was put on the other nobleman, whom it was determined by the Rockingham party, at all events to exclude from any cabinet office. In the king's situation, as he could neither contest nor protract, a few days sufficed to terminate the negotiation: but throughout every stage of it, a marked preference was exhibited towards Lord Shelburne. When the House of Commons, pursuant to its adjournment, met again on the 25th of March, an adherent of that nobleman (not a friend of the marquis, his competitor for power), was selected and authorised to communicate the state of affairs at St. James's. Dunning, who, forty-eight hours afterwards, kissed his majesty's hands on being created a peer, informed the members whom curiosity or anxiety had brought down in great numbers to Westminster, that arrangements for the formation of a new administration, which, he trusted, would meet the wishes of the house and of the nation, were in considerable forwardness. In order to allow time for their complete accomplishment, he moved that another short adjournment should take place, to Wednesday, the 27th. The motion, after a few words from Lord Surrey, expressive of a sort of

gloomy satisfaction at the intelligence imparted by Dunning, was adopted.

The leaders of opposition were nevertheless far from having surmounted all the impediments to their acquisition of office; and they soon discovered that the expulsion of Lord North, though it might open to them the door of the cabinet, by no means secured the durability of their administration. From the first moment that the new competitors for power appeared at St. James's, inextinguishable jealousies arose, and mutual distrust manifested itself on every occasion. With difficulty could they be prevented from immediately proceeding to an open rupture; and the external appearances of political union, which had been preserved during several years of parliamentary opposition, dissolved as soon as they came to divide the ministerial objects of plunder, or to dispute for preference in the royal favour. The Marquis of Rockingham, conscious that though he might ostensibly be placed at the head of the new administration, yet the king regarded him and his adherents with sentiments of alienation; while he considered Lord Shelburne with regard, and treated him with confidence; took umbrage at the distinction. In this situation of affairs, before the formation of the new cabinet, an incident which displayed the superior interest that Lord Shelburne possessed at court, nearly terminated at once the compact by which Lord North had been expelled, and consequently involved the whole embryo ministry in total confusion.

[27th March — 7th April.] Scarcely could the administration be said indeed with propriety, as yet to have any real existence: for, though Mr. Fox and Lord Shelburne had been named secretaries of state; and though Lord Camden had accepted the presidency of the council, while the Duke of Grafton was made privy seal; yet neither the new boards of treasury nor of admiralty were constituted. Lord John Cavendish alone had been sworn in, as the new chancellor of the exchequer: but, the Marquis of Rockingham, and Admiral Keppel, who were destined to preside at the two boards, were not as yet regularly appointed. The post of commander-in-chief of

the forces, as well as the master-general of the ordnance, both which had commonly or frequently been cabinet offices, still remained vacant. No individual had been proposed to be raised to the peerage; when Lord Shelburne, availing himself of the facility which he enjoyed of access to the sovereign, induced his majesty to confer the dignity of a baron, on his friend and adherent, Dunning. The business itself, which neither the king, nor Lord Shelburne, communicated to the Marquis of Rockingham; was managed with such dexterity, as well as silence and despatch, that the first intimation received of it, even by the persons about the court, arose from Dunning's kissing the king's hand at the levee, on his creation. But, no sooner had the intelligence become known, than it produced the most violent fermentation and resentment among all the Rockingham party. Considering their chief as equally overreached and insulted by the proceeding, since it was evident that Lord Shelburne could effect for his followers, objects of the highest importance, which proved to the public his superior and exclusive ascendancy at St. James's; they determined on exacting immediate reparation.

Under this impression, several of the leading persons, among whom were Fox, Burke, and George Byng, having repaired to Lord Rockingham's house in Grosvenor-square, a sort of tumultuary consultation was there held on the occasion. They unanimously agreed that the first lord of the treasury would be at once dishonoured in the cabinet, and disgraced in the public estimation; if the secretary of state, so much his inferior in official rank, could thus, without his knowledge or participation, dispose of the highest dignities to his own adherents. It was maintained, that the reparation ought to be no less public, than the affront; and that in order to wipe it away, some individual must be without delay raised to the peerage, at Lord Rockingham's personal recommendation. This resolution being adopted, it was next debated whom to choose for the honour. The selection fell on Sir Fletcher Norton, late Speaker of the House of Commons: not, indeed, so much from inclination, as from necessity; no other

person appearing equally proper to be created a peer at the same time with Dunning, as Sir Fletcher: they being, both, lawyers of great eminence in their profession, members of the House of Commons, speaking, as well as voting, in decided opposition to the late government, and rival candidates for power or office.

On the following day, Thursday, the 28th of March, the new first lord of the treasury repaired therefore to St. James's. Having obtained an audience of the king, he represented the impossibility of his continuing at the head of the intended administration, after the elevation of Mr. Dunning to a peerage, on Lord Shelburne's recommendation, unless his majesty should be graciously pleased to confer the same mark of royal favour on one of his own friends. After some hesitation, the king, apprehensive of the consequences to himself and to the public tranquillity, if Lord Rockingham and his followers should suddenly resign, as they menaced; and aware that Lord Shelburne could not support himself alone; signified his assent to the proposition: adding, that the person named, Sir Fletcher Norton, might kiss his hand at the first levee. But, the marquis peremptorily insisted on that ceremony immediately taking place on the same day. In vain the king stated the singularity and impropriety of such an act, contrary to all the usages of established court etiquette, inasmuch as no individual ever was known to be presented at the queen's drawing room, by whatever title, till he had previously been received under that denomination, at the levee. Lord Rockingham signified in reply, respectfully but tenaciously, that every form must give way on the present occasion; and he exacted compliance. Sir Fletcher being brought forward, actually kissed his majesty's hand on his creation as a baron, by the title of Lord Grantley, the same day, in the drawing room, to the no small astonishment of the oldest courtiers; and hardly less so of the newly created peer himself, who having been apprized of this extraordinary elevation, attended for the purpose at St. James's, on the previous notice of only a few hours. No instance of such a breach of established usage has occurred,

either before or since, in the course of the present reign.

This subject of contest being thus regulated, and the Rockingham party triumphant, the new administration was at length formed, though of very heterogeneous materials. Instead of *nine* individuals, who constituted Lord North's cabinet, *eleven* were now admitted; the third secretaryship of state, namely, that for the colonies, lately occupied by Lord Sackville, being extinguished. General Conway, as the recompense of his late distinguished services in parliament, was placed at the head of the army. The separation of the office of first lord of the treasury, from that of chancellor of the exchequer, made way for Lord John Cavendish's entrance into the cabinet; and the introduction of the master general of the ordnance, who had not been admitted under Lord North, brought in the Duke of Richmond: while, in order to oppose some little balance to the preponderating ascendancy of the marquis's friends, Lord Ashburton, late Mr. Dunning, contrary to general usage or precedent, was admitted to a seat, in quality of chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The transition was doubtless great in every instance; but in that of Dunning, peculiarly striking; who, from a barrister of obscure birth, though of transcendent talents, beheld himself transformed, in the space of a few hours, into a peer, a member of the cabinet, and the possessor for life of a lucrative, as well as honorable legal dignity.

The other great objects of ambition or acquisition, were shared with tolerable equality, among the friends of the two principal leaders. The Earl of Carlisle was replaced, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by the Duke of Portland. Rigby, who during near fourteen years, had enjoyed the prodigious emoluments of the pay office, without any colleague, relinquished that enviable and lucrative post to Burke; whose brother, Richard, was likewise made one of the two secretaries of the treasury. Welbore Ellis, fallen in an instant from his double elevation of secretary of state and treasurer of the navy, made way for Barré in the latter employment; thus verifying Dundas's prediction of the *Irish warming pan*: while Jenkinson was succeeded, as

secretary at war, by Mr. Thomas Townsend. Kenyon became attorney general. We were colleagues for the borough of Hindon, in that parliament. He possessed a deep and recondite knowledge of the law, the result of severe application; and was supposed to be consulted by the chancellor on all cases that arose of legal difficulty. It was, indeed, to Lord Thurlow's friendship, and the high opinion entertained by him of Kenyon's ability, that the latter was indebted, in an eminent degree, for being brought forward in political life. Though he loved wealth, he was not naturally an ambitious man. I know that he reluctantly consented to become a member of the House of Commons, and that he was more than indifferent to his continuance in that assembly. His inflexible love of justice rendered him superior to party attachments, or to party sacrifices; and he was fabricated of such tough materials that you might break him, but could never bend him. Gascoigne, under Henry the Fourth, or Sir Mathew Hale, under Cromwell, were not more intrepid and tenacious of right.

I cannot forget his expressions, when the question was agitated in the House of Commons, whether the public had or had not, a title to demand interest on the balances of money remaining in the hands of public accountants. It took place, — I mean the debate on the subject, — in the month of June, 1782, when Fox might be esteemed first minister, though Lord Rockingham was at the head of the treasury. And Fox's opinions were well known to be in favour of the accountants. For he always maintained that, "when a balance of public money lay in the hands of a public functionary, all which the country or parliament were entitled to expect from him, was, that whenever the money should be demanded, it should be forthcoming." These were nearly Fox's words, who never forgot that his father had been paymaster of the forces; that he had made a vast profit of those balances; and that his accounts remained unsettled for many years subsequent to his disease. But Kenyon, then attorney general, thought very differently on the point. "I never will preclude myself," said he, when addressing the house from

the treasury bench, "from a full right to discuss in a court of justice, the question of whether the public may not call on their servants to account for, and to refund, the great emoluments made by means of public money. I speak not from ill will to any man alive; but solely from a sense of duty in an office which I have, undeservedly, as well as unexpectedly, been called to fill. I know not how long I may continue in it; but if I should be dismissed from my present situation, I shall return to much domestic happiness, which I enjoyed before I was called into public life. So long, however, as I may remain in it, I am determined to do my duty."

A man composed of such stuff, might look down on ministers. When Mr. Eden only ventured to suppose, that in his conduct relative to Rigby and Ellis, who (as having been, the one, paymaster of the forces, and the other, treasurer of the navy), were, both, largely indebted to the public; he could be actuated by any personal feelings or motives, Kenyon instantly took fire. "I hope," said he, with great emotion, after justifying himself from the imputation, "the right honorable gentleman does not look into his own heart, to find out the motives which actuate *me* on the present occasion." Lord North endeavoured to explain Eden's expression; but the attorney general made no answer. Little conversant with the manners of polite life, Kenyon retained, even when lord chief justice of the King's Bench, to which high dignity he afterwards rose, all the original coarse homeliness of his early habits. Irascible in his temper, like his countrymen, the Welsh; destitute of all refinement in dress or external deportment, parsimonious even in a degree approaching to avarice; he nevertheless more than balanced these defects of deportment and character, by strict morality, probity, and integrity. As a member of the House of Commons, whenever he spoke, though he wanted grace and dignity, he could not be reproached with any deficiency in the essential qualities of perspicuity, energy and command of language. General Burgoyne, whose exchange had at length been effected against Laurens, the late president of the American congress;

being thus liberated from the disabilities which his surrender at Saratoga had inflicted on him, was sent to replace Sir John Irwine, as commander in chief in Ireland.

The Duke of Bolton, as a compensation for the service which he had rendered in the session of 1781, by arraigning in the House of Peers, the conduct of the first lord of the admiralty, was made governor of the Isle of Wight. During his elder brother's life, when only Lord Harry Powlett, he had served in the royal navy, where, however, he acquired no laurels; and he was commonly supposed to be the "Captain Whiffle" portrayed by Smollet, in his *Roderic Random*. Sheridan received the appointment of one of the under secretaries of state in Fox's office; who having taken for himself the *foreign* department, left the *home* secretaryship to Lord Shelburne; a partition, by no means grateful to the latter personage, whose extensive information on all subjects connected with continental or foreign affairs, qualified him eminently for that line of political employment. Mr. Orde became his under secretary. Of all the ostensible candidates for public situation, whose birth and talents seemed to call him forward to the service of the state, and whose eloquence in parliament had eminently conduced to the triumph obtained over the late administration, Mr. Pitt, alone remained without post or remuneration. Not that the new ministers manifested either insensibility to his merits, or indifference to securing such abilities in their immediate support. On the contrary, as the best proof of their consideration, they offered him the place of a lord of the treasury, in the formation of the new board. But, in making him this proposition, they appeared to have ill appreciated his character, as well as to have forgotten his late declaration in the house; and least of all to have understood the extent, as well as the depth, of his ambition. Pitt steadily rejected every proposition or solicitation, preferring to remain for the present without office. Whether this refusal originated in his consciousness of possessing talents, which, from their pre-eminence, enabled him at once to seize a cabinet place, without passing, like other

men, through any inferior gradations of political life ; or, whether it rather proceeded from that superior intelligence and discernment, which even at so early a period of youth, showed him that a ministry imbued with such discordant principles, and odious to the sovereign, could not possibly prove of long duration ; it may be difficult to determine with certainty. Probably, both those sentiments concurred in regulating this judicious line of action.

Charles Turner, member for the city of York, and one of the most eccentric men who ever sate in parliament, accepted a baronetcy from the Marquis of Rockingham. He was a man of large landed property, situated in Yorkshire, on the southern bank of the Tees, near the edge of the Bishopric of Durham. Lord Rockingham could not boast of a more enthusiastic or devoted adherent in either house ; but Turner's attachment was not bestowed on his rank or power. The constitutional principles which that nobleman professed, and those only, constituted the objects of Turner's veneration. It was to commemorate, as he said, the era of a virtuous minister and administration attaining to power, not from any impulse of personal vanity, or desire of title, that he accepted a dignity which should date and derive from the auspicious period of Lord Rockingham's nomination to the head of the treasury. Sir Charles had many peculiarities of character, dress, language, and deportment, in all which he was truly original. He never wore any coat, except one of a green colour, with *tally-ho* buttons, — for he was a decided sportsman. Yet the love of liberty, and detestation of every encroachment on the comforts, pleasures, or enjoyments of his fellow subjects, particularly in the lower classes of society, was so ardent in his bosom, that he declaimed against the *game laws* as the most oppressive and disgraceful to our national character. I remember, in the month of February of this very year, 1782, Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, having proposed in the house a revival of those laws, with a view to prevent poaching, which motion was seconded by the other representative for the same county, Sir Edward Astley ; Turner in-

stantly rose, and in animated, though unpolished language, inveighed against the whole *code*, which he stigmatised without reservation. "It is most shameful," exclaimed he, "to find this house perpetually occupied in making laws to protect gentlemen. I wish we made a few for the benefit of the poor ! Let the legislature extend protection to *them*, and the gentry will have nothing to fear from their depredations. If I had been a poor man, I am convinced that I should have been a poacher, in defiance of the laws. It is to the severity of those laws we owe the increase of poachers. I wish to see the game laws revised, and stripped of more than half their severity. My wish, nevertheless, is by no means an interested one : for every shilling that I possess is in land, and I am a sportsman as well as other gentlemen." There existed not in the kingdom a more determined enemy of the American war, or of Lord North. Turner did not want good sense, nor was he destitute of education ; but the simplicity, asperity, and untutored roughness of his ebullitions, always produced laughter. "They call us a rope of *sand*," said he, meaning the opposition. "I will tell the noble lord in the blue ribband, what he and his colleagues are. They are a rope of *onions* ; — for they stink in the nostrils of the whole country." He did not long survive his elevation to a baronetcy, dying in the subsequent year, 1783. Turner bore some resemblance to Fielding's *Squire Western* ; but with far more benevolence, probity, philanthropy, and general humanity, than *Sophia's* father possessed.

[8th April.] Never was a more total change of costume beheld than the House of Commons presented to the eye, when that assembly met for the despatch of business, after the Easter recess. The treasury bench, as well as the places behind it, had been for so many years occupied by Lord North and his friends, that it became difficult to recognise them again in their new seats, dispersed over the opposition benches, wrapped in great coats, or habited in frocks and boots. Mr. Ellis himself, no longer secretary of state, appeared for the first time in his life, in an undress. To contemplate the ministers, their suc-

cessors, emerged from their obscure lodgings, or from Brookes's, having thrown off their blue and buff uniforms; now ornamented with the appendages of full dress, or returning from court, decorated with swords, lace, and hair powder, excited still more astonishment. I confess that it appeared to me the most extraordinary revolution I ever witnessed; and the members of the new administration seemed, themselves, not to have recovered from their surprise at being thus suddenly transported across the floor of the house. Even some degree of ridicule attached to this extraordinary and sudden metamorphosis, which afforded subject for conversation, no less than food for mirth. It happened that just at the time when the change of administration took place, Lord Nugent's house, in Great George-street, having been broken open, was robbed of a variety of articles; among others, of a number of pairs of laced ruffles. He caused the particulars of the effects stolen to be advertised in some of the daily newspapers, where they were minutely specified with great precision. Coming down to the House of Commons, immediately after the recess, a gentleman who accidentally sate next to him, asked his lordship if he had yet made any discovery of the articles recently lost? "I can't say that I have," answered he, "but I shrewdly suspect that I have seen some of my laced ruffles on the hands of the gentlemen who now occupy the treasury bench." This reply, the effect of which was infinitely increased by the presence of Fox and Burke in their court dresses, obtained general circulation, and occasioned no little laughter.

All eyes were for some minutes directed towards the part of the house where the new ministers, occupied in taking the oaths on their re-election, engrossed universal attention. But no sooner had that ceremony been completed, than Colonel Luttrell (now Earl of Carhampton), rising, solicited the notice of the assembly to the affairs of Ireland, which, from their critical position, he said, admitted of no delay. He called at the same time on Mr. Eden, secretary for that kingdom, then in his place, to explain their nature, and the embarrass-

ment in which they were involved. Eden instantly obeyed the summons; and in a speech of considerable length, well digested, and by no means destitute of ability, laid open the alarming fermentation, approaching to emancipation from all dependence on the king and parliament of Great Britain, by which every class of inhabitants was animated in the sister island. With one voice, he said, they declared their determination no longer to submit to any legislation, except that of the sovereign and parliament of *Ireland*; concluding, by a motion for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the act of the 6th of George the First, as asserted a right in the government of this country to make laws for Ireland. "I do not wish," added he, "to precipitate matters; but not an instant is to be lost. I must set off for Dublin, this night, or to-morrow morning. The Irish parliament meets in eight days from the present time, and Mr. Grattan will immediately propose a declaration of rights. I shall be happy, therefore, to carry over the pleasing intelligence, that the legislature of this country is ready to give every reasonable satisfaction to the Irish parliament and people.

Eden's motion being eagerly seconded from various sides of the house, the new secretary of state rose, and addressed the assembly, in language of great animation, accompanied with visible emotion. Having reprobated the line of conduct adopted by Mr. Eden, as equally factious, injurious, and censurable, in thus unexpectedly introducing a proposition of such magnitude, whose operation might tear asunder the political ties that united the two kingdoms; he threw himself and his colleagues in the new cabinet, on the candour of the house, for protection. He protested that, though scarcely inducted, yet they had already employed much of their time in consultation on the affairs of Ireland. Before many days, or perhaps hours, would elapse, they hoped to bring forward a proposition calculated to restore harmony and concord between the two countries. Against the late administration Fox declaimed with great asperity, as having by their criminal negligence and procrastination produced the actual calamity. On Eden himself, the secretary was most severe, for quit-

ting his post, and repairing to London, obviously with no other intention than that of involving the new ministers in difficulties, before they could possibly be prepared to produce an adequate remedy. Fox terminated by moving the order of the day, though he exhorted Mr. Eden to withdraw his motion; but, he, far from manifesting a disposition to comply, repeated his intimation of leaving England without delay: adding, that if the motion which he had just submitted to the house, was not adopted, it might be too late to avoid a rupture between the two countries.

Irritated at such pertinacity on his part, which evidently originated in mischievous intentions towards the administration, and might be productive of most injurious effects to the public; several members, either connected with ministry, or composing part of the cabinet, successively interposed, and endeavoured to enforce Fox's exhortation. Eden nevertheless treating these applications with silence or disregard, General Conway, after reiterating the request, and finding it received in a similar manner, appealed to the house against him, as highly meriting a vote of censure for his conduct. So strong, indeed, was that impression, and such the sentiment of condemnation excited, that while Conway spoke, a loud and universal cry of "Move! Move! Tower! Tower!" echoed from every part of the assembly. I joined in it, myself, almost involuntarily; as did numbers of other persons, who were not at all attached to the new ministers; but, who felt nevertheless the censurable spirit of the motion, thus suddenly brought forward from motives of personal enmity or hostility. Indeed, I am persuaded, that if Conway had availed himself of the effervescence, not to say indignation, which pervaded both sides of the house, and had moved to send Mr. Eden to the Tower, it would have been adopted, unless that gentleman had prevented it by a prompt submission and apology.

The discussion still continuing, without any approximation to the object sought, Mansfield, the late solicitor general, endeavoured to defend, if not to justify, Eden's proceeding; though he himself at length seemed inclined to capitulate, on the stipulation of receiving from Fox,

a solemn assurance that the obnoxious act of George the First should be repealed. This demand called up Sheridan, who speaking for the first time in his life from the treasury bench, inveighed with equal energy and acrimony, against the extraordinary conduct of the secretary for Ireland. That functionary, Sheridan said, deserting his duty, animated solely by private pique and resentment, had not only withheld from his majesty's present ministers, all the information of which he must be in possession; but attempted to exasperate the state of things, by a proposition big with pernicious consequences to the two kingdoms. It was not however till Cornwall prepared to put the question from the chair, that Eden finding the house generally adverse to him; receiving no support from Lord North, though that nobleman was present; evidently entangled in his own web; and exposed to some censure for the line of action which he had adopted on this occasion, reluctantly consented to withdraw his motion. Far from having succeeded in embarrassing the new ministers, he had afforded them an occasion of acquiring some degree of popularity, or at least, parliamentary approbation, at their outset. Fox, in particular, by the manly promptitude of his reply, by his declarations of the system which the cabinet meant to follow, and the protestations of their fixed intention to execute all their promises of reform made before they entered on office, produced a most favourable impression on the public mind.

With the external insignia of power and employment, he seemed to have assumed in an instant, the tone, the language, and the sentiments of a minister of state; though he could not, even if he had been so inclined, immediately abandon the doctrines or the engagements, to which he had solemnly pledged himself during successive years of opposition. On the following day, he brought down a message from the crown, recommending the immediate consideration of the affairs of Ireland, with a view to such a final adjustment, as might give mutual satisfaction to both countries. It was adopted without a dissentient voice, or the slightest hesitation. In the progress of his speech on the occasion, he again alluded

with severity, "to the palliatives which the late administration," he said, "had used in treating the subjects of contest existing between Great Britain and her sister Ireland, merely in order to obtain the unworthy advantage of a temporary suspension of the evil. His majesty's present ministers came, on the contrary, with minds made up to meet the main question, to settle the distinct constitutions of the two countries, and to establish such a union or connexion between them, as might endure for successive ages." A loyal address was voted to the sovereign, re-echoing his gracious message; and the ministry appeared to commence their career at home under very favourable auspices, at least within the walls of the House of Commons.

Even the drawing room at St. James's underwent considerable alteration in its appearance, as well as the houses of parliament, in consequence of the political revolution which has driven the late ministers from power. The Earl of Hertford, one of the "ancient, most domestic ornaments" of the court, who had held the white wand of chamberlain for more than fifteen years, and whose presence in the circle seemed, from long habit, almost essential to its very existence; of course disappeared. The Duke of Manchester succeeded him. Lord Effingham, a nobleman of great eccentricity of deportment, whose name, since the riots of June, 1780, had scarcely been pronounced on the theatre of public life, became treasurer of the household, in the place of Lord Salisbury. No individual, dismissed in consequence of the change of administration, was more personally regretted by the king, than Lord Bateman, who had held, during many years, the post of master of the buck hounds. I had the honour to know him with great intimacy. The frankness and gaiety of his disposition, rendered his society peculiarly agreeable to the sovereign. Lord Bateman's descent on the maternal side was very illustrious; his mother having been grand daughter to John, Duke of Marlborough, and sister to the second duke of that name. By his paternal ancestors, he inherited only civic honours; his grandfather, Sir James Bateman, being knighted when Lord

Mayor of London, under George the First. At near seventy years of age, Lord Bateman preserved all the activity of youth, accompanied by an elasticity of mind and character which never forsook him. He might have been reinstated in the employment of master of the buck hounds, under succeeding administrations: but he preferred the enjoyment of personal liberty, and passed the last years of his life principally at his seat of Shobden, in the county of Hereford. His understanding was good, but he loved pleasure of every description, more than business; and he possessed that mediocrity of talents, which, never inspiring awe, forms the best recommendation to royal favour. Curiosity was so strongly excited to see the new ministers, and to mark the demeanour of persons, who during many years had rarely stood in the presence of the sovereign, or frequented St. James's; that numerous individuals attended the levee and the drawing room, from no other motive. Those who had always speculated on the short duration of the present administration, derived additional proofs in favour of their opinion, from the very looks and reciprocal deportment of the principal personages. Every attention shown by the king to Lord Shelburne, excited the instant jealousy of the Rockingham party, and hastened their final separation. Time alone, indeed, was necessary for making the political arrangements, indispensable before the former nobleman could venture to throw off his subjection to his colleagues, and to set up for himself, as first minister.

[9th — 25th April.] Previous to Lord North's resignation, Mr. Fox had more than once insinuated in the House of Commons, that if he were minister, he possessed the means of making a separate treaty with the Dutch, and of detaching them from France. His friends did not even scruple to assert, that "he had a peace with Holland in his pocket." Expressions, which being uttered in a period of misfortune and despondency, could not fail of producing a forcible impression on the sanguine, as well as on the credulous, part of society. One of his first attempts, as secretary of state for

foreign affairs, became in fact directed to the attainment of so salutary and important an object. In order to effect it, he thought proper to address a letter to Mons. Simolin, the Russian minister, then residing at the court of London; making through him, the offer of an immediate suspension of hostilities between Great Britain and Holland, as a step preparatory to negotiation. This proposal was afterwards warmly reiterated and seconded, by the ambassadors of Catherine the Second at the Hague. But instead of the nation deriving any benefit from Fox's hasty overture, it was received by the states general with coldness, and treated with contempt; they wisely preferring to negotiate in concert with France and Spain, whenever a plan should be set on foot for general pacification. Baffled in this experiment, the cabinet next made propositions at the court of Versailles, with a view to general accommodation; and even sent Mr. Thomas Grenville, Earl Temple's brother, to Paris, for the purpose: while Admiral Digby and Sir Guy Carleton were despatched to America, with instructions to offer an immediate acknowledgment of the independence of the thirteen colonies. The Congress, however, as if animated by the same spirit with the Dutch, refused to receive any messenger, or even to grant a passport to the person deputed by the British commissioners, for commencing a negotiation.

So conscious was the secretary of state, that some degree of ridicule attached to the failure of his attempt to open a treaty with Holland, as to induce him to anticipate public opinion, by mentioning it in the House of Commons. He judiciously prepared his audience for the disclosure, by first loading Lord North's administration with the severest epithets, as solely culpable, from their negligence or incapacity. Wretched and fallen as the country had been depicted," he said, "by himself and his friends, before they came into power, yet its real condition infinitely exceeded even their own apprehensions. His former suspicions were poor and feeble in comparison with the fact. Our *navy* was so reduced and impotent, that he thought an enquiry ought to be set on foot, in order that the

country might see the extent of the calamity." Unfortunately for the secretary, Sir George Rodney, commanding the fleet sent out and equipped by Lord Sandwich, had already gained the glorious victory of the 12th of April, though the intelligence did not reach London before the middle of the month of May. Fox alluding next to his recent experiment for making peace with the Dutch, said, that owing to the incapable measures and mismanagement of the late ministers, the greatest impediments were thrown in the way of a treaty with Holland. If the present confidential servants of his majesty, had only been called to his councils *some weeks earlier*, it would have been effected." He concluded by repeating his accusations of Lord North, accompanied with the observation, that though no man was less vindictive than himself, yet self preservation would render it necessary to lay before parliament, the deplorable state of the nation. He probably imagined, that in the prostrate position of the late minister's friends and supporters, these imputations would pass without contradiction or even observation. But the lord advocate of Scotland, impelled by the manly nature of his disposition, and not at all overborne by the secretary's bold assertions, instantly rose to answer him. After exhorting the minister rather to promote concord and unanimity within those walls, than to awaken dissension and ill-humour. "If," continued he, "our navy is really in the bad condition described by the right honorable gentleman, or has been so grossly mismanaged as he pretends, the best way of proving his assertion, will be to produce a better navy. And if it was such a very easy operation as he asserted, to make peace both with Holland and America; why does he not accomplish it, now that he and his colleagues have the conduct of the business exclusively in their own hands? Or, if they are compelled to admit that impediments stand in the way, candour might induce them to suppose that their predecessors found similar obstacles, which prevented their attainment of the object." Fox made no reply to this animadversion of Dundas. However triumphantly he conducted matters in parliament, where he experienced scarce-

ly any obstacle to his pleasure, it seemed impossible for him to begin his foreign diplomatic labours more unsuccessfully, after having held out to the country, either personally, or through the medium of his adherents, such delusive expectations.

He found it much easier to induce the House of Commons to listen to his propositions, than to persuade or to conciliate any of the belligerent powers. No opposition whatsoever was experienced from Lord North, who, though at the head of a routed party, yet remained the nominal chief of a numerous body of men. He attended very regularly in his place, and might, if he had been so disposed, have greatly impeded, if not wholly prevented, many of the measures of the new government. But far from throwing any obstacles in their way, he allowed them without molestation to complete their projects of reform, in every direction. The king having sent a message to the house on the subject, Burke opened the system of domestic retrenchment, by bringing in anew his famous bill for the reduction of the civil list, so often proposed, and so often rejected, or eluded, in preceding sessions. Powis seconded the motion. The expressions adopted by both, when speaking of the part which the king performed in it, were not calculated to render the measure itself more palatable to him. *Secret influence* was designated clearly, as the latent evil which had so long separated the sovereign from his people. Burke congratulated the house and the country, that "the auspicious moment had at length arrived, when his majesty, *liberated from the secret and pernicious counsel which interposed between him and his subjects*, now addressed them in the pure and rich benevolence of his own heart." Words, which in reality implied more censure than commendation, since he had already reigned above twenty years, without feeling or exerting this benevolent impulse. Powis spoke out in still stronger language. After describing the act itself of contracting his royal state, in order to diminish the burthens of his people, as entitled to the warmest effusions of gratitude; he added, that "the message now sent from the crown, proved the sovereign to be at length delivered from *that*

baneful and concealed adviser which had lurked unseen, and had intercepted his gracious inclinations." Fox made no allusion to *secret influence*; but he expressed his hopes that gentlemen would be *unanimous* in fulfilling his majesty's generous intentions, as it could be no longer objected that the House of Commons ought not to interfere with the civil list; the king coming forward to his people with unparalleled grace, and desiring to participate in their sufferings." In fact, not one word was uttered from any part of the house, though a smile might have been observed on certain faces; and an address to the throne was unanimously voted.

When, however, the bill itself came to be discussed in the committee, some weeks afterwards, and the plan of proposed reduction minutely detailed by Burke; instead of two hundred thousand pounds a year, which sum, by a species of political arithmetic, formed on data of his own assumption, he had calculated in 1779, would annihilate ministerial influence in the House of Commons, commensurate to fifty members or votes in parliament; he now proposed only about a third part of that annual sum for the scope of his retrenchment. Many regulations which had appeared to be indispensable, while he was in opposition, were abandoned when he spoke from the treasury bench; more undoubtedly, from compulsion, than from inclination. Some abuses owed their prospective toleration to the personal respect that, he said, he felt for the individuals, who presided over the office or department. Others were perpetuated from deference to prejudice, or popular predilection. All the regulations relative to the principality of Wales, which had formed a prominent feature of his former bill, were now, he said, given up, or at least, postponed. Not because he by any means believed that they would, if adopted, fail to be productive of great national utility; but, because they were disagreeable to the Welsh. He added, however, that he hoped a time would arrive, more propitious to their introduction. The ordnance might be safely trusted to the Duke of Richmond's vigilant frugality. Vyner, member for Lincoln, observed on this clause, that "as

the Duke of Richmond was not immortal, he would vote for the enactment of such regulations in his department, as might render it impossible for any successor at the head of the ordnance, to abuse his power, and to plunder the public." Barré afterwards reiterated in his place, the same opinions. Lord Ashburton, or rather Lord Shelburne, extended his protection to the Duchy of Lancaster. The mint was left untouched; and even two of the white wands, the treasurer and cofferer of the household, as contributing to the splendour of the court, obtained grace. Yet thus mutilated, and hardly recognizable, both Burke and Powis, when returning thanks to the king, for his message relative to this subject, melted into tears, at the prospect of their approaching triumph over court profusion and ministerial corruption.

Two bills, one for the prevention of contractors sitting in parliament; the other, for excluding officers of the excise and customs from voting at elections; were likewise passed with little difficulty or delay, through the lower house, where the administration carried all before them. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke brought in the former; Mr. Crewe, now Lord Crewe, the latter. Except from Lord Nugent and Mr. Vyner, as well as, I believe, from Bamber Gascoyne, scarcely any material opposition was experienced. Lord Nugent, besides speaking against both the bills in every stage of their progress, divided the house on them: but he could only carry about fourteen votes with him, while ministers had more than eighty. Gascoyne said that the bill for depriving revenue officers of their right of voting, violated Magna Charta, which secured to every subject his rights and franchises. Vyner represented, that sixty thousand individuals would be disfranchised by its operation. The secretary at war having remarked that nothing could be more desirable for the persons themselves, than to be thus incapacitated from voting; Mr. Anne Poulett observed, not without some wit, that the assertion reminded him of the anecdote of Don Carlos and the executioner. When the unfortunate son of Philip the Second expressed his unwillingness to submit to the stroke of

the axe, the officer of justice besought his highness to remain quiet, and suffer his head to be taken off, as it was designed for his own benefit. The honorable Mr. Poulett, son of the first Earl Poulett (who occupied the high office of first lord of the treasury, for a short period of time, under Queen Anne), was about seventy years of age, in 1782, when I knew him, and had been named after that princess, who was his god-mother. Like Welbore Ellis, he always came to the house, in a full dress suit, and regularly took his place on the government side, opposite to Rigby. He was a steady supporter of the crown, but very rarely rose to speak, being naturally of a grave and taciturn disposition. His known loyalty, and unshaken attachment to the administration which he believed to be approved by the king, subjected him to the lash of the "Rolliad." After enumerating several other members distinguished by similar principles of action, the author adds,

"And *Nancy* Poulett, as the morning fair,
Bright as the sun, but, common as the air.
Inconstant nymph! who still, with open arms,
To every minister devotes her charms."

Mr. Crewe was accompanied by near a hundred members, when he carried up his bill to the bar of the lords: but in their passage through that house, both bills, Sir Philip Clerke's, no less than the other, experienced from the chancellor, as well as from Lords Mansfield and Loughborough, the most decided opposition. These pillars of the law, far from yielding to the temper of the times, endeavoured, though ineffectually, to stem its force. Thurlow, in particular, even while holding in his hand the great seal of England, and while in his own person a member of the cabinet; yet expressed with that gloomy indignation which characterised his style of speaking, the disapprobation that he felt at such inroads on the majesty of the crown, as well as on the franchises of the subject. Unawed by the appearance of Fox and Burke, who, in order to impress him with respect, as well as to display the interest that they took in the success of these measures, usually appeared in the House of Peers, on the steps of the throne, while the bills were agitating;

Lord Thurlow animadverted on them with the utmost severity, and divided in the minority, on all the most obnoxious clauses. But the stream, which ran with too much violence, successfully to oppose its current, soon secured for each of the bills, the concurrence of the sovereign.

It cannot be disputed by the greatest enemies of reform, that various of the offices, or nominal employments, suppressed by Burke's bill, were become obsolete, destitute of any real function, and void of apparent utility. Nor will it be denied, that the annual aggregate sum which the measure saved to the country, though now reduced from two hundred thousand pounds, to about seventy-two thousand pounds a year, yet still formed a considerable object of national economy. But, on the other hand, the extinction of so many places, deprived the crown of that species of majesty, produced by the operation of time, and "the hoar of ages;" advantages, which no man knew better how to appreciate and to venerate, as well as to celebrate and sustain, than Burke himself. We beheld him, scarcely ten years afterwards, stand forward the determined champions of monarchical institutions, and the zealous opposer of almost every kind of innovation. We may likewise remark, that the board of trade, and the office of third secretary of state, both which institutions his bill abolished, have been since revived, from a conviction of their respective necessity or advantages. Even the "great wardrobe," the "treasurer of the chamber," the "jewel office," the "clerks of the board of green cloth," and some other appointments, which may appear at first sight to be most exceptionable or unnecessary; yet, as carrying us back in imagination to the reigns of the *Tudors*, by whom they were instituted, diffused over the throne itself, a Gothic grandeur, calculated to protect and to perpetuate the sanctity of the monarchical office. These adventitious aids will not be despised by those who deeply consider the nature of man, and of all human institutions.

Other consequences of an injurious description, and not foreseen at the time, or from which the author of the bill

chose to avert his view, have flowed from the measure. In Burke's eagerness to diminish the supposed overgrown influence of the crown, arising from the distribution of offices among the members of the House of Commons, a greater injury has been probably sustained by the British Constitution. The minister, deprived of the means of procuring parliamentary attendance and support, by conferring places on his adherents, has in many instances been compelled to substitute a far higher remuneration, namely, peerages. A review of Mr. Pitt's administration will form the strongest illustration of this remark. I know, indeed, from the best authority, that Burke himself lived to adopt the opinion, and like other reformers or innovators, found reason to lament the effects of his own bill. Being at Bath, in a declining state of health, not long before his decease, — I believe in 1797, — the conversation turned on the great augmentation made by Mr. Pitt to the numbers of the House of Lords, during the preceding thirteen years. "I fear," said Burke, that I am partly accountable for so disproportionate an increase of honours, by having deprived the crown and the minister of so many other sources of recompense or reward, which were extinguished by my Bill of Reform." Mr. Pitt, when he came into power, early in 1784, had in fact little left him to bestow, in proportion to the crowd of claimants, except dignities; and he was not parsimonious in their distribution. The two bills, excluding contractors from sitting in the House of Commons, and depriving revenue officers of the right of voting at elections for members of parliament; though liable, respectively, to some objections; and though both were strongly reprobated at the time, by the greatest legal characters in the House of Peers, yet appear to have obtained, and still to retain, the general approbation of the country.

Many persons of high rank reluctantly disappeared from about the king's person and court, in consequence of Burke's Bill of Reform. The Earl of Darlington quitted the jewel office; and Lord Pelham, the great wardrobe: the first of which offices owed its institution to Elizabeth; while the latter remounted to

the times of the *Plantagenets*. The Earl of Essex laid down the stag hounds, as did Lord Denbigh the harriers; while the disasters of Saratoga and of York Town were thus felt by rebound, through every avenue of St. James's. Gibbon, who had sat at the board of trade since 1779, being dismissed from his official attendance at Whitehall, found himself more at leisure to continue that great historical work which he ultimately completed on the banks of the Lake of Geneva, and which will perpetuate his name to distant ages. George Selwyn lost a lucrative appointment under the board of works; and though possessed of an affluent fortune, together with a borough, yet as he loved money, no man who suffered in consequence of the reduction of the civil list, retained a deeper resentment towards the party who had abridged his enjoyments, and diminished his income. I knew him with some degree of intimacy, having sat as his colleague in parliament during more than six years, for Ludgershall, from 1784 to 1790. He resided in Cleveland Row, in the house rendered memorable by the quarrel which took place between Sir Robert Walpole and Lord Townsend, under the reign of George the First, — when the prime minister and the secretary of state seized each other by the throat, — a scene which *Gay* is supposed to have portrayed in "The Beggar's Opera," under the characters of Peachum and Lockitt. Selwyn was a member of the House of Commons during the greater part of his life; and down to the year 1780, he constantly represented Gloucester, near which city he had a seat, at Matson. The unpopularity consequent on the American war, throughout the whole progress of which contest he supported government, occasioned his being rejected by his old constituents, at the general election which took place in that year. He told me that during the memorable siege of Gloucester, undertaken by Charles the First in 1643, Charles, Prince of Wales, and James, Duke of York, who both in turn ascended the throne, but who were then boys, remained at Matson. And he added, that James the Second, after he came to the crown, used frequently to mention

the circumstance to his grandfather when he went to court; observing, "My brother and I were generally shut up in a chamber on the second floor at Matson during the day, where you will find that we have left the marks of our confinement, inscribed with our knives, on the ledges of all the windows."

Selwyn possessed infinite wit. He had indeed succeeded to Philip, Earl of Chesterfield's reputation for *bon mots*, most of which that then attained to any celebrity, were either made by, or attributed to him. Their effect, when falling from his lips, became greatly augmented by the listless and drowsy manner in which he uttered them; — for, he always seemed half asleep: yet the promptitude of his replies was surprising. The late Duke of Queensberry, who lived in the most intimate friendship with him, told me that Selwyn was present at a public dinner with the mayor and corporation of Gloucester, in the year 1757, when the intelligence arrived of our expedition having failed before Rochfort. The mayor turning to Selwyn, "You sir," said he, "who are in the ministerial secrets, can no doubt inform us of the cause of this misfortune?" Selwyn, though utterly ignorant on the subject, yet unable to resist the occasion of amusing himself at the inquirer's expense, "I will tell you in confidence the reason, Mr. Mayor," answered he; "the fact is, that the scaling ladders prepared for the occasion, were found on trial to be too short." This solution which suggested itself to him at the moment, was considered by the mayor to be perfectly explanatory of the failure, and as such, he communicated it to all his friends; not being aware, though Selwyn perfectly well knew, that Rochfort lies on the river Charante, some leagues from the sea-shore, and that our troops had never even effected a landing on the French coast.

But it was not merely as a man of wit, that I delighted in his society. He was likewise thoroughly versed in our history, and master of many curious anecdotes, relative to the Houses of Stuart and of Brunswic. As he had an aversion to all long debates in parliament, during which he frequently fell

asleep; we used to withdraw sometimes to one of the committee rooms up stairs, for the purpose of conversation. Talking to him of the death and execution of Charles the First, he assured me that the Duchess of Portsmouth always asserted, as having communicated to her by Charles the Second, that his father was not beheaded either by Colonel Pride or Colonel Joyce; though one of the two is commonly considered to have performed that act. The duchess maintained that the man's name was Gregory Brandon. He wore a black crape stretched over his face, and had no sooner taken off the king's head, than he was put into a boat at Whitehall stairs, together with the block, the black cloth that covered it, the axe, and every article stained with the blood. Being conveyed to the tower, all the implements used in the decapitation, were immediately reduced to ashes. A purse containing a hundred broad pieces of gold was delivered to him, after which recompense received his dismissal. Brandon survived the transaction many years, but divulged it a short time before he expired. This account, as coming from the Duchess of Portsmouth, challenges great respect.

From his own father, who had acted a conspicuous part during Sir Robert Walpole's administration, Selwyn knew many of the secret springs of affairs under George the First and Second. He told me that the former of those kings, when he came over here from Hanover in 1714, understanding very imperfectly the English language; found himself so weary while assisting at the service in the Chapel Royal, that he frequently entered into conversation in French or German, with the persons behind him. Charles the Second, who could not plead the same excuse for his inattention; was accustomed, as we know from *Burnet*, to fall fast asleep; and Harry Bennet, afterwards created Earl of Arlington, usually awoke his majesty towards the conclusion of the sermon. Among the few individuals who had retained under the new reign, the places that they held or occupied about Queen Anne, was Dr. Younger, Dean of Salisbury. Anticipating the change of sovereigns, he had applied

with such success to render himself master of the German language, that he was continued in the office of clerk of the closet, which gave him great access to the king, behind whose chair he usually stood at chapel. With Younger, his majesty often talked during the service; a circumstance, which as being indecorous, naturally excited much offence. Lord Townsend, then one of the secretaries of state, animated by a sense of loyal affection, ventured to acquaint him that his deportment at chapel gave cause of regret, mingled with animadversion, to many of his most attached subjects; beseeching him at the same time, particularly to abstain from conversing with Dr. Younger. Far from resenting the freedom taken with him, his majesty promised amendment; and Lord Townsend strongly enjoined the clerk of the closet to observe in future the most decorous behaviour on his part. Finding however that they resumed or continued the same practice, Lord Townsend sent Younger a positive order, as secretary of state, directing him, without presuming to present himself again in the royal presence, to repair immediately to his deanery. Dr. Younger, conceiving the injunction to proceed from the king, obeyed without remonstrance or delay; and the secretary waiting on his majesty, informed him that the dean had received a kick from a horse which fractured his skull, of which accident he was dead. George the First expressed the deepest concern at his loss, and never entertained the most remote idea of the deception which had been practised on him. Several years afterwards, before which time Lord Townsend had quitted his employment, the king going down to review some regiments that were encamped on Salisbury Plain, the bishop and chapter of that city had the honour to be presented to him, and to kiss his hand. But when Younger approached for the purpose, his majesty, overcome with amazement at beholding again a man whom he had long considered as no more, could scarcely restrain his emotions. As soon, however, as circumstances permitted, he sent for the dean into his presence, and a mutual explanation took

place. Conscious of the rectitude and propriety of the motives which had actuated Lord Townsend in his conduct, he never expressed any sentiment of anger, or of resentment; but contented himself with promising Younger to confer on him a mitre, as soon as an occasion should present itself: an assurance which he would have probably realised, if the dean had not shortly afterwards been carried off by death.

Selwyn's nervous irritability and anxious curiosity to observe the effect of dissolution on men, exposed him to much ridicule, not unaccompanied with censure. He was accused of attending all executions; and sometimes, in order to elude notice, disguised in a female dress. I have been assured that in 1756, he went over to Paris, expressly for the purpose of witnessing the last moments of Damien, who expired under the most acute torture, for having attempted the life of Louis the Fifteenth. Being among the crowd, and attempting to approach too near the scaffold, he was at first repulsed by one of the executioners; but, having informed the person, that he had made the journey from London, solely with a view to be present at the punishment and death of Damien, the man immediately caused the people to make way, exclaiming at the same time, "*Faites place pour Monsieur. C'est un Anglois, et un amateur.*" The Baron Grimm, in his "Correspondence," asserts that the fact took place, not with respect to Selwyn, but to the celebrated Condamine. Mr. Pitt, in order to recompense Selwyn for the place of "paymaster of the works," of which he was deprived by Burke's bill, made him in 1784, "surveyor-general of the crown lands," which office he retained till his decease, in 1790.

[26th — 30th April.] Hitherto, however, Fox occasionally indulged himself in animadversions of severity on the late administration, yet no direct attack upon any of the members of that cabinet, had been made by the new ministers, or by their friends. But, Sawbridge, acting independently of men in office, brought forward to the notice of the house at this time, as a matter of revision or of censure, a pension of a thousand pounds a year, granted during the last days of

Lord North's continuance in power, to Mr. Robinson, one of the secretaries of the treasury. Sawbridge commented on the grant, with all the republican bitterness of his character. Lord North defended, and Robinson explained, the circumstances attending the transaction: while the secretary of state availed himself of the subject and the occasion, to inveigh against the late first lord of the treasury; unconscious how soon he should be compelled or induced, from ambitious motives, to form the closest connexions of policy, and even of friendship, with that nobleman. After declaiming with no ordinary asperity, against his abuse of the office that he recently held, in order to provide for his adherents and dependents, after he had declared in his place within those walls, that his majesty's ministers were no more; Fox exclaimed, "The noble lord talks of the services of his secretary. Would to God that the honorable gentleman had been idle! Nor is the observation confined to him. It extends to men of a higher rank. I wish to heaven, they had employed themselves in services less injurious to their country! I beg of the house to understand that the pension in question, as well as another of five hundred pounds a year, given to Sir Grey Cooper, and a third pension which has not been mentioned, were the work of the late ministers; not of the noble and honorable persons now called to his majesty's councils." Lord North having observed that the third pension alluded to by Fox, which was one of three thousand pounds a year, recently granted to himself, had invariably been bestowed by the crown, on all his predecessors in the same employment; added, that he had refused it, when offered him, some years earlier. But the secretary replied, "Men who have ruined their country, are not entitled to the rewards of meritorious service! Nor will the public brook that the noble lord shall receive a remuneration, equal to the great and popular Earl of Chatham."

Sawbridge, whose pertinacity of character inclined him to prosecute with unremitting ardour, whatever matter he undertook; resumed the business three days afterwards; concluding with a mo-

tion, that "the pension of one thousand pounds a year granted to John Robinson, Esq., was *unmerited by public service, and a lavish, improvident expenditure of the public money.*" In the course of his speech on the occasion, Sawbridge stated, that "the noble lord at the head of the treasury, from his habitual indolence, entrusted to the secretary the whole management of that department. To him, the negotiation of loans was committed, of which lucrative transactions he reserved to himself a share, as well as of other contracts. To him likewise was confided *the management of that house*, in which delicate line of service, he had displayed eminent dexterity. For these meritorious performances, he had obtained from the crown, besides the pension in question, grants of lands and houses, together with the reversion of an office of considerable magnitude;" every particular of which the mover detailed to the assembly. Lord North was not present; but Robinson, without discomposure, answered all the allegations; denied some of the facts, and admitted others; leaving the house to act on the occasion, as they might judge proper. Fox remained silent: but Mr. Thomas Pitt rising as soon as Robinson concluded, besought the assembly not to forget its own dignity, and the great national objects demanding their attention, by occupying themselves in such pitiful discussions. He therefore moved the *order of the day*, the secretary of state instantly availed himself of this proposition, which, he said, met his approbation; though he paid many compliments to Sawbridge, and accompanied them with the heaviest imputations on the late ministers. Mr. William Pitt supporting his relation, recommended unanimity, as presenting the only hope of national extrication; and the *order of the day* was carried without any division, though not before Lord Surrey had moved for an account of all pensions granted from the 15th of February, down to that time, the 30th of April. No opposition being made to it, the business terminated.

[1st — 6th May.] Wilkes, who during more than thirteen successive years, in various parliaments, had vainly endeavoured to expunge from the journals

of the House of Commons, the memorable resolutions relative to the Middlesex election; after being so often foiled, at length attained his object. The division which took place upon this question, when 115 members voted with him, and only 47 against him, was attended with the singular circumstance of Lord North and Fox dividing together in the minority. The new secretary of state, whose original political line of conduct, while supporting the administration which he had recently expelled, and of which he once formed a part, made it sometimes difficult for him to maintain the appearance of consistency; affected to speak and to vote from the treasury bench, against Wilkes's motion. He was, indeed, well aware of the charge that would be made against him, and alluded to it in his speech, which formed a tissue of contradictions. After observing that it was for the benefit of the English people, to give the power of expulsion to the House of Commons; he nevertheless added, that when the public voice had been loudly pronounced against it, as he admitted was the case, he would not wish to preserve the privilege, in order to make use of it for the injury of the people. "Besides," subjoined he, "when the power to enforce the privilege is lost, it becomes no longer an object to retain such a privilege. The people have *associated*, and have compelled parliament to listen to their voice." Dundas likewise opposed Wilkes's motion; but he did not the less reprobate Fox's doctrine, as dangerous, and subversive of all government. "*Associations*," he maintained, "would lead to every excess: for, if ten individuals might legally associate, so might ten thousand. From such meetings, of which, Lord George Gordon had exhibited a specimen, only confusion, tyranny, and despotism, could arise." The secretary of state made no reply: but having unfortunately given his ministerial sanction in early life, to various measures calculated for affixing parliamentary disapprobation on the celebrated member who originated the motion; Fox therefore probably thought, that a regard to his own character compelled him, however contradictory to his late line of declamation and of action, when harangu-

ing his constituents in palace yard ; to abide by, and to attempt a justification of his conduct, relative to the election for Middlesex. No public man, indeed, in my time, ever appeared to me to consider so little apology requisite for the contradictions and derelictions of his political principles ; or seemed so completely to regard the House of Commons, as an assembly fit for becoming the willing agents and instruments of every delusion, however gross or palpable, as Fox. The difficulties of the undertaking never deterred or intimidated him ; and his splendid talents, which could lend to sophistry the colours of truth, emboldened him, by turns, to attack and to defend, according to the situation in which he stood, almost every position and tenet, either of monarchical authority, or of constitutional freedom.

While the House of Commons was thus occupied in measures of reform, or engaged in retracting their past parliamentary errors, the new ministers, as if they anticipated their speedy dismissal, employed the precious moments of their precarious power, in distributing among themselves, without loss of time, the honours of the crown. *Four Garters*, which had been found on the king's table unappropriated at the time of Lord North's resignation, they naturally considered as lawful plunder. One only of the number fell to the share of the sovereign, which he was allowed, though not without some difficulty, to confer on his third son, Prince William Henry, now Duke of Clarence. The remaining three were reserved for themselves, with a due regard to their respective consequence, party, and pretensions. Lord Rockingham having long since received the order from the hands of George the Second ; the Duke of Devonshire, as head of the Whigs, was invested with one blue ribband, and the Duke of Richmond honoured with another. Lord Shelburne took for himself, as was to be expected, the fourth *Garter*. A very great person, then in early youth, who was present at the ceremony of the investiture, observed with considerable discrimination of character, that never did three men receive the order in so dissimilar and characteristic a manner. "The Duke of Devonshire," said he,

"advanced up to the sovereign, with his phlegmatic, cold, awkward air, like a clown. Lord Shelburne came forward, bowing on every side, smiling and fawning, like a courtier. The Duke of Richmond presented himself, easy, unembarrassed, and with dignity, as a gentleman."

The Earl of Ashburnham, who had been during more than six years groom of the stole, laid claim to one of the *Garters*, under a promise which he asserted to have received from the king, and of which he endeavoured to enforce the performance. His royal master, though he did not deny the engagement, pleaded his inability to fulfil it, under the actual circumstances of his situation, which left him no longer any option in distributing the decorations in question. This excuse did not, however, satisfy Lord Ashburnham, who was said to have addressed to the king a letter of reproach on the occasion, couched in language rather too severe from a subject to his sovereign, even if the cause of offence had been better proved, or more legitimate in itself. His resentment at the supposed infraction of the royal word, impelled him to resign his office ; which, as being in the king's immediate family, and near his person, has always been considered exempt from ministerial interference. Lord Weymouth, who succeeded him, had acted a much more important part in earlier periods of his majesty's reign, when he filled, during a very considerable time, the post of secretary of state ; and even held the lord lieutenancy of Ireland for a few months, though he never crossed over to Dublin. He was a man of very eminent talents, though accompanied with great singularities of character ; highly convivial, whose conversation entertained and delighted ; but in order to profit of his society it was necessary to follow him to White's, to sit down to supper, to drink deep of claret, and to remain at table till a very late hour of the night, or rather, of the morning. "Junius," alluding to this well known circumstance, when addressing the Duke of Grafton, in June, 1771, says, referring to Lord Weymouth, "Yet he must have bread, my lord, or rather he must have wine. If you deny him the cup, there will be

no keeping him within the pale of the ministry." Lord Gower, the chancellor, and Rigby, were, through life, his intimate friends and companions. His application to business by no means kept pace with his abilities, nor was he ever a popular minister. Indeed, if we except the first Mr. Pitt, Henry Bilson Legge, who was chancellor of the exchequer during about five months after his majesty's accession to the throne, and perhaps we may add, to a certain degree, the Marquis of Rockingham, all three of whom were devolved on him by his grandfather, or forced upon by the nation; George the Third cannot be said to have had any minister, in any department, previous to Lord North's resignation, who enjoyed popularity. We must except from the remark Lord Camden, during the short time that he held the great seal as chancellor. Lord Weymouth attracted a considerable portion of the indignation which characterises Junius's opening letter, written in January, 1769, for having officially signed the order which authorised the military to fire on the populace assembled in St. George's Fields. "Recovered from the errors of his youth, from the distraction of play, and the bewitching smiles of Burgundy," says that writer, "behold him exerting the whole strength of his clear, unclouded faculties, in the service of the crown." He had preceded Lord Ashburnham as groom of the stole, in 1775; from which office he became secretary of state for the home department; an employment that he held about four years, being succeeded in 1779 by the Earl of Hillsborough. Ten years afterwards, Pitt created Lord Weymouth a marquis.

Though the administration of which Lord North so long constituted the head, had ceased to exist, yet many of the parliamentary institutions which had originated under him, still continued in activity. Among the principal, might be esteemed the secret committee for inquiring into the state of the East India Company's affairs. The lord advocate of Scotland, as their chairman, brought forward almost as soon as the House of Commons met after the change of ministers, various *reports*, calculated to show the causes, not only of the disgraces and

calamities sustained in the Carnatic, but of the improper expenditure of blood and treasure in other parts of Hindostan. On these *reports* he founded a number of *resolutions*, which were finally adopted by the house. Sir Thomas Rumbold, late governor of Madras, and two of his colleagues, members of the council, became the first objects of public accusation. The second blow fell on Sir Elijah Impey, who, in his quality of chief justice of Bengal, was supposed, or asserted, in more than one instance, to have lent his legal aid and support to the supreme government, from self-interested motives, and for unjust, as well as pernicious purposes. Hastings himself, then governor general of Bengal, and Hornby, governor of Bombay, became implicated or involved in these criminations. Dundas, when mentioning the former, in the course of his opening speech to the house, admitted that Mr. Hastings had on many occasions proved himself a most meritorious servant of the East India Company; but added, that he was not authorized to fancy himself an Alexander, or an Aurengzbe; preferring frantic military expeditions before the improvement of commerce, and the cultivation of the arts of peace. He then called on the new ministers to aid and support him; or, if his propositions for the amelioration of our affairs in India, clashed with any of their plans, he offered to fessign the whole business into their hands. Fox in reply assured him of the warmest support from administration. Our situation in the east, as depicted by the learned lord, held up, he said, a mirror, reflecting the state of our affairs in the west. Then alluding to Lord North, he subjoined, "The effects of the pernicious system, which, thank God, is at length destroyed, are felt at this hour throughout every portion of the empire!" Burke, in still stronger language, inveighed against the system of corruption, which, he asserted, had pervaded all the channels of the state under the late ministry. Measures, adapted to the nature of the imputed offences, or misconduct of each of the above mentioned persons, were adopted. Rumbold, who possessed a seat in the house, as one of the representatives for Shaftsbury; having arrived from India early in 1781,

under circumstances that rendered him highly unpopular, was restrained from either leaving the kingdom, or from alienating his property, by act of parliament; and severer steps were meditated, or set on foot against him. He contrived nevertheless, after bringing his eldest son into the house soon afterwards, to protract the proceedings, and ultimately to elude all punishment. An address was voted by a great majority, and presented to his majesty, requesting him to recall Sir Elijah Impey from his judicial situation in India. Finally, resolutions, of a nature tending to hold out both Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hornby, in their public capacity, as men who had committed acts of the most culpable or unjustifiable kind, were agreed to in the house. But the advanced period of the session, and the unsettled state of domestic affairs in a cabinet divided by animosity, prevented or postponed the further prosecution of these interesting concerns, to the subsequent year.

On the other side the Atlantic, misfortune still accompanied the English arms. St. Christopher's, after a long and gallant defence, surrendered: the Islands of Nevis and Montserrat were lost. Even the valuable settlements of Demerara and Essequibo, situate on the continent of South America, which we had taken in the preceding year from the Dutch, were recaptured by France. Rodney, indeed, having arrived out, joined Sir Samuel Hood at Barbadoes: but he found himself unable to intercept, or to prevent, the arrival of a convoy from Brest, which brought to the French Admiral De Grasse, supplies the most essential for his projected hostile operations. At home, general despondency or apathy pervaded the country. Every allegation which had been brought forward against the late first lord of the admiralty while in office, was renewed with augmented violence, now that he had retired to private life; and these clamors were supported or encouraged by the new ministers. Fox, speaking on the subject of retrenchment, in the House of Commons, upon the 6th of May, when Burke's bill for diminishing the royal household, was under consideration, launched out into his accustomed condemnation of the preceding ministry.

"An inquiry into the actual state of the finances," he observed, "was already commenced. He anxiously wished that another inquiry should be instituted, to disclose the condition of the navy, *which had been found deplorable beyond conception.*" "As to the nature of our foreign alliances," added he, "no inquiry is necessary. Should a committee be appointed to sit upon that subject, their report must be concise; *we have none.*" Sir George Rodney's victory constituted the best reply to the charges made against Lord Sandwich. The American war, and the calamities which it produced, not any want of exertion, foresight, or talent in the late cabinet, had alienated from us the continental powers, and rendered ineffectual every endeavour to form connexions of policy or friendship with the European states. Rodney himself was enveloped in the accusations levelled against the board of admiralty which had sent him out; and disasters more severe than any that we had yet experienced, were predicted or anticipated, as about to happen in that quarter of the globe where he commanded. Never was the nation less prepared for, nor less in expectation of, the great victory that impended in the West Indies, than a week, or even a day, before the intelligence arrived. It required the utmost exertions of the new admiralty, to prevent the Dutch squadron, which quitted the Texel at this time, from effecting a junction with the combined fleets of France and Spain, commanded by Guichen. Lord Howe, now restored to the British navy, and like Keppel, created an English viscount, effected a service so distinguished, which unquestionably entitled him to the gratitude of his country.

[7th May.] If Mr. Pitt, whether from the dictates of profound ambition, or from the calculations of ordinary prudence, had thought proper to refuse accepting any place or situation under the new ministry; he did not on that account, withdraw his individual exertions as a member of parliament, or retire in any degree from public view and admiration. On the contrary, he came eminently forward at this time, as a candidate for national approbation, in the delicate, as well as arduous character of a

political reformer. The spirit of the times, which operated greatly in his favour, removed many of those obstacles, that might have impeded him, if he had made the attempt under the former administration. While Burke carried retrenchment into the palace, as well as to the table, of the sovereign; Pitt aspired to renovate, or to reorganise, the national representation. In the progress of a speech, conceived with consummate ability, and delivered from the treasury bench, he endeavoured to show the vices of the actual state of popular election, and to point out the most efficacious or salutary remedies. The abuses alleged by him to exist, which were indeed indisputable, seemed at first sight loudly to demand redress. But, on the other hand, theory and practice might be found greatly at variance; and even the reformers themselves, it was well known, differed widely in their ideas or opinions on the point. The Duke of Richmond, who carried his principles to an Utopian and visionary length, would have extended the right of voting, almost to the whole population of Great Britain. Fox supported on this occasion, both with his eloquence and his vote, the plan proposed by Pitt: but Burke, less democratic in his ideas of government, refused to lend his powerful aid to a cause which he disapproved. The secretary at war, Mr. Townsend, who looked forward to the possession of a borough, at the decease of George Selwyn, his uncle; equally absented himself, as did others of the ministerial followers. Lord North, though he attended the discussion, and opposed all innovation, yet to the surprise of his friends, took no active part in the debate. Dundas, however, supplied his place, and made an animated appeal against the projected reform; as did Mr. Thomas Pitt, at great length, with much ability. Indeed, I thought his speech as eloquent, as persuasive, and more solid in its deductions, than that of his relation, who brought forward the question.

Conscious as Mr. Thomas Pitt was, that he represented only a *nominal* borough; and elected himself, together with his father-in-law, Pinckney Wilkinson, as members for *Old Sarum*; he felt the subject to demand extraordinary

delicacy. Nor did he make a false step, from the commencement to the close of his discourse. On the contrary, he endeavoured with great address, to show from his own conduct through successive parliaments;—for he had sate, I believe, in five;—that a man returned to the House of Commons by a single tenement, might be as independent, as high minded, and as incorrupt, as he who took his seat for a county, or for the city of London. While he paid the greatest compliments to the mover of the proposition, he denied the principles and the facts on which his relation founded every one of his conclusions. Equality of representation, Mr. Thomas Pitt observed, never was, nor could have been the basis on which our ancestors meant to erect the liberties of England, since they allowed the little county of Rutland to send as many members to that assembly, as Yorkshire or Somerset. To one proposition for reforming the representation, and to one only, which had been recommended by the great Earl of Chatham, he expressed his assent; namely, the addition of a knight of the shire, or member for every county throughout England. Sawbridge seconded, and Sheridan supported, Pitt's motion; but Sir Charles Turner, by his originality and blunt simplicity of diction, as well as of sentiment, attracted more attention than either the one or the other. He said, "in his opinion, the House of Commons might be justly considered as a parcel of thieves, who having stolen an estate, were apprehensive of allowing any person to see the title deeds, from the fear of again losing it by such an inspection. That they were not the representatives of the people, was clear; for they had carried on the cursed American war, though the voice of the whole nation opposed it." "I believe, indeed," added he, "the present ministers are more honest than their predecessors; but I want the Constitution to be so established, that no administration, however bad, may be able to convert it to the injury of the people." Powis strongly opposed the motion, as did Rigby, who not only treated all innovations as dangerous theoretical experiments, but denied that a reform in the national representation, was demanded by the peo-

ple. *Associations*, he said, formed exclusively of individuals who met for the express purpose, proceeded to elect *delegates*; and these latter published *resolutions* in the newspapers, which were falsely assumed to speak the public opinion. Sir Horace Mann moved *the order of the day*.

The measure itself not being a party question, though of a nature the most interesting; by no means attracted the attendance which had been produced by the motions, that preceded the dissolution of the late administration. Scarcely more than three hundred members voted upon it, while near five hundred had been present in more than one of the divisions of the month of March. Pitt's proposition "to appoint a committee for inquiring into the state of the national representation," though it could only be considered as a preliminary step, yet was negatived by a majority of *twenty*. I made one of that small majority, and it is a vote which I not only never have repented, but of which I more and more approve on full consideration;—for I have always regarded the rejection of Pitt's attempt, in 1782, to alter the national representation, as one of the narrowest escapes which the British Constitution has had of subversion, in our time. Eleven individuals passing over from one side to the other, might have opened wide the door of innovation. And once opened, what power could shut it? The moment too was peculiarly favourable to propositions of reform and amelioration, when the nation, bent down and disgusted by the calamities of the American war, lent a ready ear to every project that held out the prospect of a better order of things. When the same subject was agitated anew in the following session, the danger was over. Peace had been restored; and though Mr. Pitt not only brought it again forward, but was joined by two of his most formidable opponents;—I mean Mr. Thomas Pitt and Mr. Dundas;—yet the house rejected it by a great majority. So complete a change had taken place in public opinion, between the two periods! It was indeed difficult not to reflect, while listening to the arguments of Mr. Pitt, who eloquently depicted the corruption of the rotten

boroughs, among which, several, he said, "were to be considered as within the control of the Carnatic, and under the immediate influence of the Nabob of Arcot;" that he was himself, sitting at that very time, for Appleby, by the influence, or in other words, by the nomination of an English nabob, Sir James Lowther. To the corrupted state of the representation, therefore, it was owing that he had himself obtained a place in the House of Commons.

It was equally impossible not to be conscious, that if the regulation which enacts that every member of that assembly shall be *bonâ fide* possessed of three hundred pounds per annum, freehold estate, had been severely and literally enforced; neither Fox, nor Pitt, nor Sheridan, nor many other eminent individuals, could ever have sat in parliament. Probably, indeed, on the day that Mr. Pitt made his motion, he scarcely possessed any property; certainly no landed property: and as to Fox, though actually secretary of state, he was known to be plunged in debts, contracted by play, which left him without fortune, or almost means of support. But they did not less constitute the two most distinguished persons of the age in which they lived, the ornaments of their country in different lines. Fox always maintained without reserve, in private conversation, as well as in parliament, that to enforce rigidly the rule relative to the qualifications of members, would be at once to exclude talents from obtaining entrance into the house. So little, indeed, may speculation and fact agree, that if the list of representatives for the county of York, of Devon, or of Lincoln, ever since the reign of Elizabeth down to the present year, were to be compared with those who have been sent to parliament during the same period of time, from the vilest Cornish borough, we shall find that in every quality justly recommending to a seat in the legislature, namely, high birth, extensive property, distinguished talents, or public principle and virtue, the superiority will be found, in many instances, perhaps in most, to incline on the side of the persons elected for the boroughs. Such an estimate might be difficult to make, and must be always, in some measure, open

to dispute; but it serves to prove that various principles in legislation, as well as various abuses, do not produce the effects which might naturally be expected to result from them in theory.

[8th—16th May.] Two great public measures were successively brought forward about this time, by the new administration; of both which, the secretary of state formed the official organ for their communication to the House of Commons. Both appeared to me highly deserving of approbation, as dictated by a vigorous policy, or by a spirit of wise conciliation. The first was a plan for arming the people, or more properly, an invitation to them to arm themselves, contained in a circular letter addressed by the minister for the home department, to the magistrates of the principal cities throughout the kingdom. If we contemplate the critical position of Great Britain in May, 1782, previous to our receiving the intelligence of Rodney's victory, — surrounded by enemies who had been, during successive years, almost masters of the English channel, — while the whole east coast, from Leith down to Yarmouth, lay exposed to an attack or to an invasion from the Dutch, who had recently treated with contempt Fox's overtures for a separate treaty; if we weigh these circumstances, we cannot, with justice, refuse our full tribute of praise to an act of such judicious energy. Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, nevertheless, animated, as he always was, by public, spirited, and honest, though in this instance, mistaken views of national benefit or safety, brought the consideration of Lord Shelburne's letter before the House of Commons. Mindful of Lord George Gordon's outrages, when a furious, but, happily, an unarmed mob, surrounded and menaced both the assemblies of parliament, he called upon the king's ministers to explain and to justify their present proceeding; a proceeding unauthorised previously by either branch of the legislature. Thus questioned, or rather inculpated, Fox rose, and in a speech of great ability, worthy an enlightened, as well as a liberal statesman, assigned the most convincing reasons for the adoption of the measure. Nor did he omit, according to his usual prac-

tice, to derive new arguments in its justification, drawn from the incapacity, neglect, or culpable want of exertion in the late ministers, whom he accused of keeping the country ignorant of their danger, and not daring, themselves, to look it in the face. He received, nevertheless, on this occasion, both from Dundas and from Rigby, the strongest assurances of support, accompanied with the warmest eulogiums on the conduct of the cabinet. Mr. Coke himself, though sustained in his arguments by Mansfield, the late solicitor general, admitted the validity of the reasons which the secretary of state assigned, and only demanded that the measure should receive the sanction of parliament, previous to its general adoption. No act of the Marquis of Rockingham's government seems entitled to more unqualified commendation than the plan for thus rendering the people the agents of their own protection against foreign force. It has been found in later times, when improved and extended, our best security against internal insurrection, as well as against the formidable armaments of revolutionary France.

[17th May.] The second measure to which I allude, regarded Ireland, and was dictated by an overwhelming necessity, if not by enlarged and generous views of policy. That island, completely in possession of independence, and defended by her own volunteers, exacted, with arms in her hands, a renunciation of all parliamentary or legislative supremacy on the part of Great Britain, together with a similar abandonment of the appelland jurisdiction exercised here in the courts of law. In return for these concessions, she offered her loyal submission to the King of *Ireland*, the common sovereign of both kingdoms. Fox, after demonstrating with great force of reason, that we had no other alternative left us than acquiescence, subjoined: "If, therefore, I shall this day be compelled to move any proposition humiliating to Englishmen, the fault is not mine. It is the fault of those ministers who left the volunteers of Ireland in a condition to make the demands contained in the addresses laid upon your table; not, indeed, by leaving arms in their hands, but by leaving

them their injuries and their oppressions.”—“Of the volunteers themselves, I must speak respectfully, for they have acted with temper and moderation; nor have they committed a single act which does not excite my veneration and respect. Whatever blame may be attributed throughout this whole business, I impute not a particle of it to Ireland. *I lay it all at the door of the late administration.*” He then moved to repeal the act of 1719, which declared the dependence of Ireland on the crown of Great Britain, observing, that it would constitute a pledge to the inhabitants of the sister island of our sincerity and determination to conduct ourselves openly throughout every stage of the transaction.

Mr. Thomas Pitt, who had performed a very prominent part in all the debates of the lower house, during the whole course of the last, and of the present session, seconded the motion; but not without previously entering his protest against some of the principles and doctrines laid down by Fox on that day. Doctrines or opinions, which it must be owned, coming from a minister of the crown, seated on the treasury bench, having the management of the House of Commons, and in some measure directing the cabinet itself, sounded very extraordinary to loyal ears; and savoured more, as I thought, of Algernon Sydney, or of Hampden, than of a secretary of state under a monarchy. Not a word was uttered throughout the whole discussion, by any member of Lord North's administration, either in their own exculpation, or expressive of their sentiments relative to the propositions about to be adopted. I must except Mr. Eden from this remark, who was present in his place, and gave his assent or approbation, qualified nevertheless by certain reservations, to Fox's proposal. The motions passed without a dissentient voice, though not without a feeling of universal humiliation. Ireland imitating America, had in fact emancipated herself from all subjection to British laws, but she still remained obedient to the monarchy. Perhaps this day may be esteemed the point of our lowest depression as a nation, during the calamitous period of time between the commence-

ment of the American war of 1775, and the peace of 1783. Only a few hours afterwards arrived the tidings of Rodney's victory; an event which electrified the whole population of Great Britain; proportionately depressed our European enemies; and being followed by their repulse before Gibraltar, at the interval of scarcely four months, produced our extrication.

Pitt having failed in his attempt to alter the representation in the House of Commons, Sawbridge endeavoured in some measure to attain the same object by shortening the duration of parliaments; but his motion was happily rejected; 149 voting against it, while only 61 members supported the proposition. The debate nevertheless was not only animated, but gave rise to some circumstances of great singularity. Rigby opposed it, as from *him* might have been expected; treating the idea itself with contempt or ridicule, and utterly denying that it was either the sense or the wish of the people at large. He concluded by adverting to a meeting of the electors of Westminster, which had been held in Westminster Hall a few days before; observing sarcastically, that “the best sense of the assembly there convened, could not probably be collected upon this occasion, on account of Mr. Fox's absence from it.” The secretary of state immediately rose, and with the manly disdain of all little prudential arts, or half measures, which always characterised him, whether in or out of office, replied that his only reason for not taking the chair, when that numerous and respectable body of individuals met, was because he knew their intention of addressing his majesty on the late change of ministers. Being himself a member of the new cabinet, he conceived it indecorous to preside on such an occasion. “The right honorable gentleman,” continued he, “who has just sat down, asks how are we to collect the sense of the people? Why let him turn his eyes towards Ireland, and see how it has been collected there. The parliament of that country spoke one language, and the nation spoke another. In consequence the people armed: but it is the fatality of this country never to open its eyes till general ruin menaces,

and every man is preparing to take up a musket." We must admit that these expressions, even if we allow their truth, and admire their energy, would have been more suitable to the leader of opposition than to a man filling one of the highest offices of state. Such unquestionably was the impression made by them at St. James's; and I believe I might add, in St. Giles's. It was evident that Fox, even while holding the seal of his department, looked more to the approbation and support of the people for retaining his situation, than to the favour of the sovereign. We may even suspect that he already foresaw or anticipated the events which took place, only a few weeks afterwards on Lord Rockingham's decease. Nor can we wonder that George the Third should entertain strong prejudices against a man, who seemed never to forget that he owed his power solely to the predilection of the people, and who only hoped to preserve it by their active interference. Fox, when speaking in the House of Commons, would have done wisely to recollect that another illustrious statesman, as well as profound writer, who like himself, passed almost his whole life in opposition to the government of his day; — I mean the Cardinal de Retz; — has observed — "*qu'il vaut mieux faire des sottises, que d'en dire*:" words dictated by a perfect knowledge of human nature and of man.

Pitt sustained Sawbridge's motion with far more decision, more energy, and with a much stronger conviction of its utility to the cause of constitutional freedom, than was manifested by the secretary of state. The latter lent only a very limited approbation to it: adding, that "as he was convinced the people wished it, and *would have it*, he should vote for it; though he doubted whether it would be productive of the beneficial effects, expected to result from the proposition." I am indeed persuaded, that if Fox had been once confirmed in office, and acceptable to the sovereign, he would have steadily repressed all democratic innovations; as, on the other hand, had Pitt passed his whole life on the opposition bench, poor and excluded from power, I believe he would have en-

deavoured to throw his weight into the scale of the popular representation. So much does situation, as well as sentiment, operate on the tenor of our conduct through life! It appeared to me that Pitt had received from nature, a greater mixture of republican spirit, than animated his rival; but royal favour and employment softened its asperity; while his superior judgment and command over himself, enabled him to conceal those emotions, to which Fox imprudently gave vent. Sir Charles Turner set the house in a roar, though at his own expense, by his answer to Rigby's observations on the meeting held in Westminster Hall. "I will make free to tell the right honorable gentleman," said he, "that more good sense was uttered in that assembly and to a much honester audience, than I ever witnessed within these walls. The people who attend there, do not come for hire, and to get places. They meet for the purpose of asserting their rights, and to defend their wives and children." Powis, whose love of liberty was always under the control of moderation, good sense, and loyalty, opposed Sawbridge's experiments on the British Constitution, as neither desired by the nation in general, nor if conceded, likely to operate for the public felicity and advantage. In a speech of considerable length, full of matter, decorated with all the charms of elocution, Burke brought his powerful assistance to the same side; demonstrating how injurious to the people themselves, to the public tranquillity, and to the greatness of the state, the abbreviation of parliaments will be found in practice. He always held and maintained similar principles: nor was Fox, I believe, at all chagrined at the result of the debate, and of the division.

Nearly two months had now elapsed since North's resignation; during which period of time, though he attended frequently in his place; yet, except when personally attacked, as he had been a few weeks before, on the subject of his own, and of Robinson's pension; he had scarcely given any marks of political or parliamentary existence. Still less had he thrown any impediments in the way of the new ministers. Even Fox's

reproaches or accusations did not seem to rouse him, though they might painfully wound his feelings. This line of action was probably wise and judicious, as it allowed time for the operation of events, domestic, as well as foreign; while he might avail himself of the errors of the new ministers, or of their divisions. The fate of Jamaica in the west, of our territories in the east, and of Gibraltar in the south, were all problematical. Under so deep a cloud, oppressed by the loss of America, and unpopular, he could not immediately emerge. Like Lord North, Jenkinson equally withdrew from public observation; rather affecting to take his seat, unnoticed, in obscure parts of the house, than to appear conspicuous on the opposition bench; though he more than once rose to speak on points unconnected with party, as they presented themselves for discussion; and he never spoke without throwing light on the subject under examination. Among all the eminent supporters of the late ministry, Dundas and Rigby alone held together, spoke, voted, and acted in a sort of concert; sometimes supporting the new administration, but without abandoning their former opinions or principles. This union nevertheless terminated with Lord Rockingham's tenure of power; Dundas, then attaching himself to the Earl of Shelburne and Pitt; while Rigby, pressed for the payment of his large balances due to the public, finally joined the coalition of Lord North and Fox.

In 1782, Rigby might however be considered as a declining, if not a setting luminary; whereas the lord advocate of Scotland was a rising political constellation. Nor could any comparison be made between their respective abilities. The late paymaster of the forces, who had risen under the patronage of John, Duke of Bedford, by whose friendship he was principally elevated to the lucrative post that he had so long exclusively occupied; derived his principal support from the powerful party of that deceased nobleman, better known during the first years of the present reign, by the denomination of "the Bloomsbury gang." His own talents, which had received very little improvement from edu-

cation or cultivation; though good, and admirably calculated in many points of view, for a popular assembly, yet derived much of their effect from the manner of their possessor. He spoke too from an eminence, while holding the pay office, where the festivity of his table attracted many supporters. But when dislodged from that fortress where he had sustained himself so long, and removed to a house of very moderate dimensions in St. James's Place, his abilities sunk nearer to their just level. He might indeed have then said to George the Third, as the lord keeper, Sir Nicholas Bacon, did to Queen Elizabeth, when she observed that his house was too small for him, "It is your majesty who has made me too great for my house." Dundas, on the other hand, though no longer seated on the treasury bench by Lord North, and thrown into the shade, in consequence of the change of administration, contained in himself all the materials of which a superior minister might be composed. True, indeed, he wanted the classic elegance of Pitt and Fox, of Burke and Sheridan: but in masculine eloquence, decision of character, firmness, resources of mind, suavity of manners, application, and all the qualities of a statesman, he manifested no deficiency.

[18th May.] Such was the general aspect of the House of Commons, when the capital and the country were thrown into a delirium of joy, on receiving the intelligence of Rodney's victory over De Grasse, gained upon the preceding 12th of April. It is difficult for us in this age, who have been accustomed to obtain naval advantages over the French; and who were used to calculate beforehand, on the destruction of every fleet that effected its escape from the ports of France, as soon as we could come up with them; to appreciate, or to imagine, its effect on the public mind. We had been habituated, during so long a time, under Kestel, Byron, Hardy, Parker, Graves, Geary, Darby, and their successors, to indecisive or unfortunate engagements, productive of no beneficial results, that the nation began to despair of recovering its former ascendancy on the ocean. In fact, during near twenty years, ever since the termination of the war with

France in 1763, the British flag had scarcely been any where triumphant: while the navies of the House of Bourbon, throughout the progress of the American contest, annually insulted us in the channel, intercepted our mercantile convoys, blocked our harbours, and threatened our coasts. Under these circumstances, the excess of the public exultation was prodigiously augmented, by the dejection that pervaded all ranks during the former part of the month of May, and by the utter apparent improbability of such an event taking place.

When I reflect on the emotions to which it gave rise in London, I cannot compare them with any occurrence of the same kind, that we have since witnessed in this country. The victory of Lord Howe, gained on the first of June, 1794, glorious and salutary as it was to Great Britain; yet seemed to be more a triumph over Jacobinism and anarchy, than over the French nation or navy. It was Robespierre and his regicide accomplices, not Louis the Sixteenth, whom we there vanquished. Lord St. Vincent, and Lord Duncan, unquestionably merited, each, the highest eulogiums: but they destroyed, at Cape St. Vincent, and at Camperdown, the fleets of Spain and of Holland, not those of France. And no Englishman is insensible to the distinction. The sublime victory of Trafalgar itself, was clouded by the death of Nelson, which checked and tempered the general joy. If I were to mention any naval action, the news of which seemed to diffuse sentiments nearly resembling those felt in May, 1782, I should incline to name that of Aboukir. But in the battle of the Nile, where the destruction of the enemy was much more complete, though we destroyed and blew up the French admiral's ship, we did not either capture her, or her commander. There was combined in Rodney's victory, as Lord Loughborough at the time remarked in the House of Peers, all "the pomp and pride, and circumstance of war." It commenced with the rising sun, and only terminated with that setting luminary. The elements were hushed, only a light air prevailing; and the contending fleets were very nearly matched. Jamaica, the prize contended for by the two na-

tions, was preserved by the result; while all the promised conquests of France and Spain, so near their apparent realization, disappeared, no more to be revived, even in idea. It constituted a sort of compensation to Great Britain, for so many years of disgrace, for so great an expenditure of blood and treasure, and even for the loss of America itself. The country, exhausted and humiliated, seemed to revive in its own estimation, and to resume once more its dignity among nations. France, amidst all her past success, declined proportionably in the opinion of Europe, and has never since arrogated the same rank, as a naval power. It formed in fact the last triumph of England on the element of the water, over the House of Bourbon, before that great family itself, after reigning eight hundred years over the French, sunk under the torrent of revolution and anarchy.

Lord Cranston, one of the captains of the *Formidable*, Sir George Rodney's ship, who brought over the news to this country; having, in consequence of that commander's special injunctions, waited on Lord Sackville, though then no longer in office as American secretary, in order to communicate to him the particulars of the action; I had an opportunity of hearing Lord Cranston's account of the engagement. He was sent, after the *Ville de Paris* struck, to take possession of her, as well as to receive De Grasse's sword; and he described the scene which the French admiral's ship presented, on his ascending her side, as altogether terrible. Between the foremast and mainmast, at every step he took, he said that he was over his buckles in blood, the carnage having been prodigious; but as numbers of cattle and sheep were stowed between decks, they had suffered not less than the crew and troops, from the effects of the cannon. On the quarter-deck, which remained still covered with dead and wounded, only De Grasse himself, together with two or three other persons, continued standing. The French admiral had received a contusion in the loins, from a splinter, but was otherwise unhurt; a circumstance the more remarkable, he having been, during the whole action, for so many hours, exposed to a destructive fire, which swept

away almost all his officers, and repeatedly cleared the quarter-deck. He was a tall, robust, and martial figure; presenting in that moment, an object of respect, no less than of concern and sympathy. Lord Cranston said, that De Grasse could not recover from the astonishment into which he was plunged; the expressions of which he often reiterated, at seeing, in the course of so short a time, his vessel taken, his fleet defeated, and himself a prisoner. He was allowed to pass the night on board his own ship, with every testimony of attention and regard manifested towards him, on the part of the British commander.

An opinion which became very generally prevalent at the time, and obtained much belief, has made a deep impression on the public mind; namely, that this victory, signal, as it must ever be esteemed, might nevertheless have been rendered far more complete, if it had been immediately improved by pursuing without delay, the flying enemy. The friends of Sir Samuel Hood strongly maintained that position; and partial as I am to the memory of Lord Rodney, I confess that there always appeared to me, to have been some foundation for the assertion. He was himself well aware of the charge; and I have heard him defend the line of conduct which he adopted subsequent to the victory, by very plausible, if not by solid and unanswerable reasons. He observed, that it was altogether unwarrantable, and might have been attended with the most ruinous consequences, to have detached twelve or more ships of the line, under Sir Samuel Hood, in pursuit of twenty-five at least of the French; which number remained together, as was believed, after the action, and still constituted a most formidable force. If any check had been experienced by us, in consequence of such eagerness or precipitation, it was obvious that the fruits of the victory itself might even have been lost. Bougainville and Vaudreuil, who commanded under De Grasse, enjoyed a higher reputation for naval skill, than the commander in chief, and might have repaired the defeat. How far these facts or assertions may carry conviction to every mind, I cannot venture to determine.

Fox, when moving the thanks of the

House of Commons to Sir George Rodney, which act he performed in his place, as secretary of state, only a few days afterwards; mentioned with expressions of great delight, the unanimity which pervaded the victorious fleet. "It was," he said, "with peculiar satisfaction he could assure the house, that every letter received from the West Indies, breathed the most perfect harmony. No other dispute or competition existed among the officers, except who should be most forward in advancing the public cause." But Lord Rodney, after his return to England, made no scruple of declaring the contrary in mixed company, where I was myself present. He even wrote home at the time, in his private letters, more than one of which I have seen; that so violent was the spirit of party and faction in his own fleet, as almost to supersede and extinguish the affection felt towards their sovereign and their country, in the bosoms of many individuals serving under him. To such a height had it attained, that he asserted there were among them, officers of high rank, and of unquestionable courage, who nevertheless bore so inveterate an animosity to the administration then existing; particularly to the first lord of the admiralty, the Earl of Sandwich; as almost to wish for a defeat, if it would produce the dismissal of ministers. Similar assertions were made by members of the House of Commons, in their speeches. However incredible the fact itself may appear, and however lamentable it must be considered, if it was well founded; yet it is not easy to conceive the antipathies, political and personal, that had grown up in the English navy, during the American war. They formed one of the characteristic features of the times, and operated to the inconceivable injury of the British name and nation.

The commencement of Rodney's public letter, addressed to Mr. Stephens, the secretary of the admiralty, on this glorious occasion, excited a smile among the critics and grammarians; as he stated, that "It had pleased God, *out* of his divine providence, to grant to his majesty's arms a most complete victory over the fleet of his enemy; whereas, it seemed rather to have been an act performed *in* his divine providence. This

error of a naval commander, unaccustomed to composition, and whose profession was not the pen, but the sword; did not however attract the same comments, as an official despatch which we have since perused, sent from one of his Britannic majesty's ambassadors; who, addressing the secretary of state, from *Constantinople*, appeared, by some act of oblivious inadvertence, to consider himself in *Asia*. Rodney's enemies, of whom he had a great number, asserted, that after the victory was gained, he gave way to a sort of intoxication of mind, on finding himself master of the French admiral's person and ship. I remember, they said, that he seated himself in an arm-chair, placed on the quarter-deck of the "*Formidable*," as the moon rose, in order to indulge his sight with the view of the "*Ville de Paris*," which lay near him in a disabled state, and whose sides far overtopped those of his own vessel. And they added, that he burst into expressions or exclamations of extravagant self-praise and complacency; mingled with some reproaches on the want of ministerial gratitude, which he had experienced for his past services. Even admitting all these facts to be true in their utmost extent, they only prove the infirmity of human nature; and similar instances of weakness occur in the history of the most illustrious commanders. Rodney, like the celebrated Marshal Villars, so distinguished under Louis the Fourteenth, talked perpetually of himself, and was the hero of his own story. But posterity will never forget the debt of gratitude due to his services, nor cease to consider him as one of the greatest men whom the English navy produced in the course of the eighteenth century. He unquestionably displayed coolness and science, on the day of the 12th of April; directed in person every manœuvre, and preserved during twelve hours that the action lasted, the utmost presence of mind. Lord Cranston said that he never quitted the quarter-deck for a minute, nor took any refreshment, except the support he derived from a lemon, which he held constantly in his hand, and applied frequently to his lips.

If Rodney did not spare his animadversions on the spirit of political enmity and faction which pervaded the British

navy, his opponent, the Count De Grasse, made still louder accusations, and sent home stronger charges to the court of Versailles, against the jealousies or rivalities which actuated the officers serving under him, on that memorable day. They doubtless, towards the close of the action, abandoned their commander to his fate, and sought their safety in flight; but the unforeseen manœuvre by which Rodney had intersected the French line, at the commencement of the engagement, threw the whole fleet into inextricable confusion; and it is very doubtful whether by prolonging, or even by renewing the contest, Bougainville and Vaudreuil would have in any measure retrieved the misfortune. De Grasse, it is admitted on all hands, displayed the most unconquerable firmness. But perhaps he highly merited censure, at a moment when he saw before him, in full prospect, so vast an object as the conquest and reduction of Jamaica, not to have suffered one or two ships of the French line to fall into our hands rather than sacrifice, as he did, the whole plan of the campaign to their preservation. I know such to have been the general opinion entertained throughout France, where De Grasse laboured under popular odium to so great a degree, that while, after the ensuing peace, Suffrein always received, on entering the theatres at Paris, the warmest testimonies of admiration from every part of the house, De Grasse did not venture to present himself at the public spectacles from the apprehension of insult. Even the court manifested similar sentiments; and though decorated with the order of the "*St. Esprit*," he could not obtain permission to walk in the annual "*Procession du Cordon Bleu*" at Versailles, for several years subsequent to the defeat in the West Indies.

The effect of so splendid a service rendered to his country at a moment of such dejection, and the popularity which it justly produced, in some measure disarmed the meditated attacks of Rodney's opponents at home. Burke, who had heaped the severest accusations upon him, for his conduct towards the inhabitants of St. Eustatius, and who was preparing to bring forward a motion in the House of Commons, tending to crimi-

nate him for his acts while in possession of the island, immediately abandoned the intention. With one of those classic allusions which were familiar to his elegant mind, he observed, that "the great national benefit performed by the English admiral, obliterated his errors; and like the laurel crown decreed by the Roman senate to Julius Cæsar, covered, as well as concealed his baldness." Even the rancour expressed by the new ministers and their friends, towards Lord Sandwich, seemed to be blunted, if not mollified, by this undeniable proof of his meritorious exertions in sending out a fleet to the West Indies capable of vanquishing the French naval force. It was justly said that *Alexander* had conquered with the troops of *Philip*. No farther mention of impeachment or prosecution was made against the first lord of the admiralty. The cabinet, nevertheless, evincing, in every part of their conduct, the reluctance with which they remunerated Rodney's merits, had already superseded him, by naming Admiral Pigot to the command of the fleet in the West Indies. But as he had not quitted England before intelligence arrived of the victory gained over De Grasse, it was evidently the wish of the country, loudly expressed, that Rodney should not be recalled at a moment when he had raised the naval character of Great Britain, humbled France, and saved Jamaica. The new administration, however, far from paying any regard to this expression of the general opinion; and apprehensive of some motion being made on the subject, in one or the other of the two houses of parliament; instantly sent off Pigot, in a quick sailing frigate, from Plymouth, with orders to replace the victorious commander.

Severe comments were passed out of doors upon the appointment, made under such circumstances; especially as Pigot had been already constituted a member of the new board of admiralty. Even the House of Commons, though since Lord North's resignation the majority seemed completely subservient to Fox, yet manifested some symptoms of disapprobation. It was, besides, commonly asserted that the secretary of state for foreign affairs lay under pecuniary obligations to Pigot, of several

thousand pounds, for losses incurred at play. And though such a report might have originated in error or malevolence, yet it was difficult to disprove; as Fox's notorious passion for gaming had subjected him to similar engagements and embarrassments. Lord Keppel, when questioned in the House of Peers, respecting the fact of Pigot's appointment, felt so conscious of the indefensibility of the measure that he dared not to own it; but he contrived to evade the inquiry by stating the want of evidence before them, to prove the nomination. It was impossible more clearly to avow how much he was ashamed of such a transaction. The opposition, during Lord North's administration, in their anxiety to decry the Earl of Sandwich, then first lord of the admiralty, asserted that Sir Edward Hughes was bound to divide with him a certain proportion of whatever prize money he might acquire, as a return for being appointed to the naval command in the East Indies. "Junius" treats the Duke of Grafton, when first minister, in various letters, with indignation, for having given a pension of five hundred pounds a year to Sir John Moore, whom he designates as a "broken gambler." Nor does he hesitate to add, that the pension was "probably an acquittance on the part of the duke, of favours upon the turf." But how infinitely less culpable were Lord Sandwich, or the Duke of Grafton, had the allegations been ever so clearly proved, than was Fox, if we assume the truth of the fact imputed to him, in acquitting his debt to Pigot, by sending him out to the West Indies?

Rodney's victory, if it had taken place two months earlier, would probably have operated to retard, or altogether to prevent, Lord North's resignation. Nor did any man doubt, that the admiral himself would have received more distinguishing marks of ministerial gratitude, as well of royal bounty, if Lord North had continued at the head of affairs, than were conferred on him by that nobleman's successors. Lord Howe and Admiral Keppel had just been raised by their party, to the dignity of English *viscounts*, without the performance of any naval service on the part of the latter officer. Many persons thought that an *earldom* would

not have constituted a reward too eminent for so important a victory. We have seen that high rank of the peerage conferred since on Sir John Jervis, for the battle gained over the Spaniards, off Cape St. Vincent's; a victory, as was commonly reported, principally due to Sir Horatio Nelson. Lord Duncan, Lord Hood, and Lord Bridport, have all been created for their exploits, English *viscounts*. It was not without evident marks of unwillingness, that a *barony*, and a pension of two thousand pounds per annum, were rather extorted from, than spontaneously given by, the ministry, to Rodney; accompanied with his immediate supersession in the command of the fleet. It must however be admitted on the other hand, that previous to the time of which I am now writing, the most distinguished naval services rarely conducted to the peerage. Anson, it is true, from a concurrence of circumstances, was raised to it: but neither Saunders, nor Boscawen, nor Pocock, attained to that honour. Even Hawke, far from being called up to the House of Peers, after he had destroyed the fleet of France in 1759, at the mouth of the Loire, was only made a *baron* by Lord North, near seventeen years afterwards; and then in company with several other individuals who were raised to the same dignity. It is for posterity to judge how far these circumstances may form some excuse, for the apparent want of liberality towards a man, who had rendered so critical, as well as so distinguished a service to his country.

[22d May.] No sooner had the House of Commons assembled, after the adjournment of a few days which followed Sawbridge's motion, than the secretary of state rising, moved the thanks of the house to Sir George Rodney, for his late glorious victory; of which event he spoke in the warmest terms of grateful admiration, though conscious that the triumphant commander who had achieved it, was already superseded by him, in order to make way for Pigot. Such acts of ministerial or political inconsistency, never indeed appeared to cost Fox any effort, as he covered them under the blaze of sophistry, eloquence, and talent. On this

occasion, he must nevertheless have felt how contradictory was his conduct in praising, rewarding, and recalling the same man, at one and the same time. Lord North, who ever since the 20th day of March, seemed to have remained in a sort of stupor; now coming forward spontaneously, joined in the tribute due to Rodney for a victory, which, he said, was not only the greatest gained in the course of the present war, but, perhaps, the most complete of any recorded in the naval annals of England. Unquestionably, the late first minister derived a pride and a confidence from the same event, which involved the new cabinet in proportionate embarrassment. After dwelling for a few minutes, on the brilliant services just rendered, Lord North concluded by remarking, that it would be proper to extend the thanks of the house to the flag officers of the fleet, who had merited so well of their country. To this proposition Fox instantly assented, with many acknowledgments to the noble mover for the suggestion; and for the first time since Lord North's resignation, some expressions of courtesy and respect fell from the lips of the secretary of state, addressed to a person whom he had hitherto only loaded with accusations. So much had the unexpected intelligence just arrived, already mollified the asperity of the new administration towards their predecessors! Mr. Rolle, then member for the county of Devon, and since raised to the peerage, having asked if it was true that Sir George Rodney was about to be superseded in his command; Fox replied that he was already recalled, and another officer sent out to succeed him. Such an act, even if Rodney had not performed so recent, and so splendid a service, could scarcely be justified, either on public, or on private grounds: but taking place instantly after a victory so eminent, it excited general condemnation.

Impressed with that sentiment, Rolle rose a second time, and stated his determination to move an address to his majesty, that he would be pleased not to remove the admiral from his present situation. Had such a motion been actually submitted to the house, it is by no

means improbable, the new ministry might have been left in a minority : but Dundas extricated Fox from a dilemma to which even *his* pre-eminent ability might have proved inadequate without assistance. The lord advocate observed that such a proceeding would intrench on the prerogative of the crown, and at the same time violate the rules by which parliament was accustomed to regulate its conduct ; as the responsibility of ministers must be removed from their own shoulders, to those of the House of Commons. " No individual," he added, " could entertain higher feelings of gratitude towards the gallant commander in question, than he did ; but a paramount regard to the Constitution, impelled him to oppose the proposition." Rolle then dropping his first intention, declared that he would nevertheless move an address to the king, to bestow some mark of royal favour on the admiral. Here, however, he was once more stopped by Dundas, who said that a motion of such a nature would be in fact dictating to the sovereign, in whom alone was constitutionally vested the power of conferring rewards or graces : adding, that it was to be presumed, the servants of the crown would offer such advice to their prince on the present occasion, as it was worthy of him to pursue. Fox became now as profuse in his expressions of acknowledgment to the lord advocate, as he had previously been to Lord North. In Dundas's doctrine, he said, he fully concurred ; and with the decision of tone and character natural to him, he protested that no man or men, short of the majority of the house, should ever induce or compel him to explain on what grounds one officer was recalled, or another appointed. It was a loyal prerogative, which he would not allow to be either abridged or controlled. " For," concluded he, " though I am an enemy to the influence of the crown, I will always support its just prerogative."

Whether the motives by which Mr. Dundas was actuated in thus extending such opportune support to administration, were the only springs of his conduct ; or whether any less obvious reasons prompted him to stand forward, and to extend a sort of shield over them ; must be left to conjecture. Certainly, the

service rendered was one of no ordinary description. But Governor Johnstone, though he did not attempt to contravert the lord advocate's assertions ; yet, after expressing his sense of the glorious achievement just performed in the West Indies, added, " I could have desired that the thanks of this house should have been moved from some other quarter, not from the ministers, who have just disgraced Sir George Rodney, by recalling him." — " The secretary of state tells us that unanimity reigns throughout the fleet. And is that a reason for superseding the gallant commander, and tearing him from the men whom he has so often conducted to victory ? Under such circumstances, the very thanks of this assembly become an insult, when accompanied by his supercession." Almost any other minister than Fox, would have been embarrassed under such a charge, nor was even he altogether without evident discomposure. As however he never abandoned a friend or a measure, because the one was in distress, or the other unpopular ; as he always trusted to his own powers of mind for extrication ; and the determination to send out Pigot, having been taken ; he undertook to defend it. His speech nevertheless formed a mass of contradictory matter. He began by denying in the strongest terms, that *recall* and *disgrace* had in them any species of alliance. If he had entertained any prejudices against the gallant admiral, for his conduct at St. Eustatius, he said, the recent victory had obliterated them. On Johnstone he pressed with great severity, for preventing the unanimity of the house : but the governor, whose tenacity in maintaining whatever proposition he embraced, equalled that of the secretary ; rose to reply. The discussion might even have assumed a new form, if Cornwall, the speaker, interposing from the chair, had not for the third time in the same day, come to the aid of administration, by calling Johnstone to order. No further impediment being presented, the thanks were voted, and the house adjourned ; Fox having exhibited a strong proof of his ministerial ascendancy over the assembly, though undoubtedly in contradiction to the opinion of a great majority of the members present on the occasion.

[23d — 30th May.] The public dissatisfaction nevertheless being loudly and generally expressed in every corner of London, at the recall of Sir George Rodney, Mr. Rolfe brought forward the subject a second time, to parliamentary notice. He observed, that to supersede an admiral in the moment of victory, was in itself an impolitic measure; but to send out as his successor, a man who for near twenty years had not once been at sea, and who had never performed in the whole course of his professional life, any distinguished naval service, constituted an act most unwise and censurable. Rosewarne, member for Truro, remarked, that the present ministers were now committing, against the general sense of the country, the very act which they so violently reprobated in their predecessors; namely, driving from the navy the most able and distinguished officers. "The Earl of Sandwich," added he, "has been denominated by the secretary of state, in former debates, a minister of the King of France. He has approved himself a bad minister to his employer, since he has confessedly sent out to the West Indies, one of the best appointed fleets which ever quitted the ports of England." I spoke, myself, on the same side, in that debate, and ventured to assert that the only similar case occurring in our annals, presented itself under Queen Anne, when the great Duke of Marlborough, in the midst of his triumphs, was recalled, in order to make way for the Duke of Ormond. Nor did I hesitate to declare my conviction that the victory just gained, though perhaps less complete than the defeat of Conflans by Admiral Hawke in 1759; yet under the circumstances of the moment, might justly be accounted superior in its effects to that or to any achievement in our naval records. Upon what principle then could Admirals Howe and Keppel have been created *viscounts*, while only the dignity of a *baron* was conferred on the man, who had performed so transcendent a service? Lord North, though he said he wished to decline giving any opinion on the recent supersession, and the new appointment, characterized it nevertheless as a hasty measure. "If," continued he, "a similar act had been committed under the late administration, I should

have been attacked without mercy from every quarter. Yet, though I do not approve the nomination of Admiral Pigot, I value the unanimity of the fleet so highly, that I should be reluctant to send out any resolution, which might convey a censure upon his appointment. Unanimity, both at home and abroad, are indispensable; and though I was made a personal sacrifice to obtaining it, I shall rejoice if the present ministers experience it in its utmost extent."

These sentiments, however elevated or patriotic they may seem, were by no means received on the part of the secretary of state, either with gratitude, or even with satisfaction. On the contrary, after questioning the sincerity of Lord North in his expressions of cordiality, and his pretended wishes to preserve unanimity among the officers and seamen of the fleet; he observed, that unless the motion, which criminated ministers for recalling Sir George Rodney, was to be followed by another, for their removal, the first would be nugatory. "Did the noble lord," he demanded, "mean to go that length? And if such was his intention, why did he not speak out?" Of Pigot, the secretary expressed himself in language of great encomium, as being every way qualified to succeed Rodney. "The crime that he had committed in the eyes of the late ministers, lay in his name being found in a certain *paper*, together with those of various other admirals, deprecating the trial of Keppel." Relative to Lord Rodney, he appeared to labour under no small embarrassment, and to involve himself in much contradiction. The victory just gained, Fox admitted to be brilliant; but his conduct at St. Eustatius, had produced prejudices against him. "I am ready," added he, "to balance his victory against his demerits, and to bury in oblivion all enquiry respecting his past conduct, unless the intemperate zeal of the admiral's friends, shall provoke me to adopt another line of conduct." He concluded by rather insinuating than asserting, that if a *baron* was not considered a rank of the peerage sufficiently elevated for Rodney's services, no objection would be made to conferring on him a higher title.

If the secretary expected by the style

and tone of his reply, to intimidate or to silence his adversaries on that day, the event did not justify his assumption. Lord North, after animadverting with some wit, on various parts of the preceding speech, denied the assertions made respecting Pigot. The late admiralty, he observed, had offered him a command, which he thought proper to decline. But, as Rodney had constantly refused to sign the *paper* in question, might not his recall arise from that very circumstance? "Had his majesty's ministers, of whom I formed a member," continued he, "recalled a great and illustrious officer in the moment of victory, we should have been assailed with motion after motion in this house." Severe as Lord North might seem in these remarks, Johnstone far exceeded him. There existed indeed between the governor and the secretary of state, a degree of personal ill-will approaching to enmity; the latter always affecting to regard Johnstone as an apostate or a deserter; he having, some years earlier, left the ranks of opposition and joined the administration, by whom he had been employed, both as a negotiator, and in the line of his profession. Johnstone in retaliation, treated Fox as factious, and as sacrificing every consideration to party, or to private views of ambition. Starting up as soon as Lord North had finished, "Now," exclaimed he, "I am perfectly satisfied with the supersession of my noble friend. The right honorable secretary holds him up as a delinquent. If he be such, unquestionably he ought to be recalled. I now rejoice, as much as I was previously shocked, at this treatment:—for, now an opportunity will be afforded him to clear his character from the aspersions of his enemies. Charges brought against him by Jews and traitors! Charges which he will refute with ease; and of which fact I can speak with certainty, having perused many parts of my noble friend's defence."—"The secretary of state proposes to compromise the charge, and to bury it in an *earldom*. But I scorn such a proposal, and in my friend's name I protest against honours, which are to be purchased by such a compromise. Honours and titles can never sit easy on a delinquent."

After thus exhaling his resentment, he then entered on the particulars of the action fought on the 12th of April, as well as on other parts of Lord Rodney's naval exploits: but as Lord North, though he highly disapproved the recall of that illustrious commander, did not desire to push matters to a question, no division took place. Ministers remained masters of the field: not however without suffering in public opinion, which censured them in the strongest terms. An attempt, made by Sir Francis Basset, now Lord De Dunstanville, only a few days afterwards, to procure for Lord Rodney, a provision of four thousand pounds a year from the crown, underwent the same fate as Mr. Rolle's motion: Fox parried it in a similar manner. A *barony* with *half* the annual sum proposed by Basset, was ultimately conferred on him. He returned home, and Pigot assumed the command of the victorious fleet: but, I believe, in the course of six or seven months that he retained it, he never captured any vessel of the enemy, except a Spanish polacre, nor performed any other eminent service. All the deserved popularity, which Fox—for he only was regarded as directing the cabinet;—had obtained by the measures embraced relative to arming the people, and for conciliating Ireland; was more than counterbalanced by the selection of Pigot to replace Rodney. If the Marquis of Rockingham approved so hasty an act, he must be esteemed a weak, or an ill-advised minister. If he reflectively allowed the secretary of state to sacrifice the public interest, to his own personal predilections or objects, he was a highly culpable minister. I am not sufficiently informed on the point, to venture on hazarding any opinion. Posterity, better instructed, may perhaps decide upon it. Fox unquestionably lost the finest occasion which fortune could have presented him, for acquiring general applause and admiration, by continuing Rodney in the command, after intelligence had arrived of the glorious result of the 12th of April.

[June.] While the victory obtained over De Grasse, produced so vast and beneficial an alteration in the affairs of Great Britain beyond the Atlantic; time

seemed rapidly maturing another important change, or rather convulsion, in the domestic concerns of the kingdom. From the first formation of the new cabinet, its jarring materials indicated, in the opinions of all discerning men, their speedy disunion and separation. Fox, conscious of the alienation in which the king held him, morally, as well as politically, possessed too much penetration not to foresee, and to predict, an approaching change of administration. He was not without difficulty restrained from precipitating it, by his open disapprobation of the intended, or imputed measures, of some of his colleagues. The stern inflexibility of Lord Thurlow, likewise, who as chancellor, thwarted and opposed, in the House of Peers, many of his measures, greatly irritated him. Already Fox began to alter his language, when speaking of that nobleman; on whom, while a member of the late cabinet, he had lavished so many encomiums at the expense of his colleagues in the administration. Nor did the preference shown towards Lord Shelburne, on all occasions, by his majesty, tend less to accelerate a rupture. In this situation of things, the decline of the Marquis of Rockingham's health, by incapacitating him to take as active a part in public affairs as he had previously done, removed the only remaining serious impediment: while it facilitated the accomplishment of those objects, which prudence and precaution alone had hitherto compelled the sovereign to delay, till the arrival of a favourable opportunity.

[1st — 20th June.] Hitherto during the course of nearly two sessions, Fox and Pitt had almost invariably coincided upon every point submitted to parliamentary discussion: but the term of their apparent political union now approached. Lord Mahon, who, by his first marriage stood in the near relation of a brother in law to Mr. Pitt, was then one of the representatives for Wycombe. His ardent, zealous, and impetuous mind, tinged with deep shades of republicanism and eccentricity, which extended even to his dress and manners; was equally marked by a bold originality of character, very enlightened views of the public welfare or amelioration, inflexible pertinacity, and a steady uprightness of

intention. This nobleman, who was at that time about twenty-nine years of age, having introduced a bill into the house, for the prevention of expense and bribery at elections, Powis strongly opposed it. Pitt replied to him; denying that the regulations proposed, would constitute any innovation on the British Constitution, which, on the contrary, they were calculated to renovate and restore. Mr. Secretary Fox took the contrary side, and in a speech of great ability, after many flattering compliments to his honorable *friend*, maintained nevertheless that the principles of the bill had not been fairly stated by him. On all questions or points which had for their object to effect an equal representation," he said, "Mr. Pitt might rely on his firmest concurrence and support. There, they never could disagree: but on the present subject, their opinions differed, and he had stated with much deference the reasons of his dissent." Pitt did not meet these expressions of friendly respect, with all the cordiality or suavity that might have been expected. He was indeed lavish of his encomiums on the splendid display of eloquence made by the secretary of state; which, he observed, impressed him with deeper admiration, because, instead of overturning the arguments which he had himself used, it on the contrary supported them. The house dividing, Lord Mahon's bill was carried by a majority of only one; and being again resumed three days afterwards, the discussion was renewed between Pitt and Fox; not, indeed, with any asperity or personality, but with much pertinacity. Sheridan joined in the debate, taking part against one of the most important clauses; which being rejected by sixty-six votes, opposed to twenty-six, Lord Mahon immediately declared that he would proceed no further in the measure. It would not, indeed, of itself have excited much attention, if it had not elicited the first sparks of disagreement between two persons, who attracted so great a share of national consideration.

[22d — 30th June.] One of the last important or interesting discussions which took place in the House of Commons, previous to the Marquis of Rockingham's decease, owed its existence to the attor-

ney general. That intrepid and upright lawyer, acting without any concert whatever, uncertain of support from any quarter, but impelled by his deep sense of public justice and of private rectitude, brought forward to parliamentary notice the question relative to the balances of money remaining in the hands of public accountants. The inquiry being levelled principally, though not solely, against Rigby, who as late as the month of May, 1781, held no less a balance in his possession than eleven hundred thousand pounds; he, apprehensive of some prompt or efficacious resolution being adopted, which might subject him to difficulties of a pecuniary nature, procured by personal applications a very numerous attendance. I have rarely witnessed so many members present in their places, at so advanced a period of the session. To this circumstance Kenyon alluded, when he rose to make his propositions, observing that it gave him pleasure to see so full a house on such an occasion. With stern severity of voice and manner, he declared that only a strong sense of duty actuated him. "Party views," added he, "I have none, nor have I consulted any individual whatever, on the nature and propriety of the motions I am about to make. Nay, I am ignorant whether any member of the house will second them; but my determination to propose them remains unalterable." It must be confessed that such an attorney general does not arise frequently, nor could a man of so independent a mind be acceptable to any, except ministers of the most elevated and incorrupt description. Having stated that his object was to compel the payment of the balances due to the public, who, he said, had a right to the issues and profits of their own money; he added, that if he should be defeated in that house, the courts of law would still remain open to him, where he might bring the question to a legal decision. He concluded by moving various resolutions, one of which declared that "Rigby and Welbore Ellis, were both accountable for the interest received by them, of the balances that respectively remained in their hands, from the day of their quitting their late offices."

No sooner had Kenyon finished than Fox presented himself to notice; and after acknowledging that his learned friend had not consulted *him* on the business just opened, he contested with much warmth and equal ingenuity, the attorney general's proposition. It might, he admitted, be law; but it did not appear to him to be common sense, — an assertion which he endeavoured to elucidate, as well as to prove, by pointing out the essential difference between a guardian, who is bound to place the money of his ward in a state to yield *interest*; and a public accountant, who is only held responsible for the *capital* advanced to him for public purposes. I must confess that this doctrine appeared to me to be sound, and by no means inconsistent with the immutable principles of justice; but from the lips of the secretary of state it came with a bad grace: his father, Lord Holland, standing in the same position as Rigby; being accused by the public voice, though perhaps unjustly, as a great defaulter; and his executors never having, down to that day, been able to obtain his *quietus* from the exchequer. Yet Lord Holland had quitted the pay office more than seventeen years, when Kenyon agitated the question then before the house, during all which time the public derived no benefit from the balances remaining due from that nobleman's estate.

Governor Johnstone, who never lost any opportunity of attacking Fox, though he disapproved of Kenyon's motion, yet contrived to wound the secretary in a tender part. "Why," he demanded, "should the executors of Lord Holland be allowed many years for paying in his balances, if Rigby and Ellis were to be compelled to make a similar payment within the short space of two months? As to myself," continued he, "my reason for attending in my place to-day, was not with a design of supporting any particular cause; but merely from curiosity, in order to observe what part the right honorable secretary would take on a question where he is himself so personally concerned." Nevertheless, Lord North coinciding perfectly with Fox, in the doctrines that he had laid down, and pronouncing them to be *orthodox*; Wallace, the late attorney general, de-

claring that, in his opinion, the public had no right whatever to demand any interest on the money lying in the hands of great national accountants, — an opinion which he sustained by strong reasoning; Powis agreeing in the justice, as well as in the solidity of Fox's observations; and the chancellor of the exchequer supporting the same arguments;—under these circumstances, Kenyon consented to withdraw the obnoxious resolution. Having, however, substituted in its place a motion for leave to bring in a bill to enable the exchequer to receive the balances due from Rigby and Ellis, he was again opposed, and on a division, left in a minority of eleven. The secretary of state, as well as the other members of administration, supported and voted with Kenyon, though probably Fox was by no means displeased at the result of the day.

No rational doubt can exist, that even if death had not carried off the Marquis of Rockingham, yet a change in the administration would equally have taken place, nearly at the same time, and in the same manner, as it was afterwards effected. The necessity of making such arrangements as might, it was hoped, secure its duration, and enable Lord Shelburne to surmount the opposition to be expected in parliament, had solely prevented him hitherto from accepting the place of first lord of the treasury. But as the session drew towards its close, that difficulty gradually ceased; while the period which must of course elapse between the prorogation and the subsequent meeting, would afford, in all probability, if well improved, various means of strengthening the new ministry. Lord Shelburne had already made advances to, and had sounded Mr. Pitt. His talents, eloquence, and popularity, sustained by his illustrious name, rendered him, notwithstanding his youth, capable of being successfully opposed to Fox, in the House of Commons. His ambition, which had impelled him to disdain, and to reject, a secondary place under the existing administration, pointed out to Lord Shelburne the obvious bait, by which he might be induced to lend his powerful support; namely, a cabinet office. The decorum and regularity of his private life, alto-

gether untinged with the vices of Fox's character, gave him a vast superiority, in the estimation of all those who considered correct moral deportment as indispensable to a man placed in public situation. In the contemplation of these circumstances, and with these intentions, it is well known that the king fully determined to displace such members of the cabinet as constituted the Rockingham party; and to transfer the management of the treasury to the Earl of Shelburne. The lapse of a few days, would perhaps have disclosed and produced this important event, when the decease of the first minister spared his majesty the necessity of dismissing him from his post.

[1st of July.] Lord Rockingham, though hardly fifty-two years of age, already sunk under an infirm and debilitated constitution. A decay, to which was added a slow fever, or as it was denominated, *influenza*, a species of epidemic distemper, had for some time undermined his strength, without appearing to menace his immediate dissolution. He was in his place in the House of Peers, for the last time, on the 3d of June, where he both spoke and voted in support of Mr. Crewe's bill, for depriving revenue officers of their vote in elections. But when he rose to address the house, he declared that he felt himself so severely indisposed, as to be almost incapable of uttering a word. He even made use of a singular expression; — for he added, “the disorder universally prevalent, afflicts me so violently, that at times I am not completely in possession of myself.” His speech nevertheless displayed no defect of mind. Soon after the king's birth-day, having quitted Grosvenor-square, he retired to Roehampton, where his recovery was confidently expected by his friends, and even predicted by his medical attendants. Indeed, neither Fox nor Burke seem to have been prepared for his decease; though the former, with the manly, but imprudent decision that marked his political character, instantly determined either to keep possession of the treasury by proxy, or to resign his office. Burke, though he personally detested Lord Shelburne, yet would, I believe, have gladly retained his situa-

tion, under a new first minister of the king's election : but he could not separate himself from Fox. On that day, they held a long conversation, evidently of the most interesting and serious description, in the court of requests, where they continued walking backwards and forwards, long after the speaker had taken the chair. At length they both repaired to the house, where the marquis's death being announced, warm eulogiums were conferred on his memory, from various quarters. Frederic Montagu, himself a man of distinguished probity, when mentioning Lord Rockingham, said, "Such was my opinion of his integrity of heart, and firmness of mind in resisting every act that ought to be resisted, as to make his concurrence or approbation sufficient to sanctify in my judgment, almost any measure." "He was," observed Fox, "an honour to his country, and an ornament to human nature. Others, I admit, may have possessed more brilliant talents ; but I know of none who more truly loved his country, or who displayed in a more eminent degree, that extraordinary combination of firmness of mind, with softness of manners, by which he was peculiarly characterised." "Well may I be excused," exclaimed Burke, "for mingling my tears with those of all ranks and descriptions of men, for the inestimable loss which we have sustained by the death of this most excellent and virtuous character ! He is gone to appear before that tribunal where we must all render an account of our actions ; and I believe, no soul ever went with a greater and better founded certainty of approbation." These encomiums may have been merited, as paid to his moral worth and steady rectitude of intention : but, we must remember by whom, and when, they were uttered. Fox, Burke, and Montagu, all relapsed into a comparative obscurity, by his death. History will speak of him with more moderation. An amiable and a respectable individual, rather than a superior man, nature had not designed him to be the first minister of a great country. *Junius* well characterizes his formation of mind, when he speaks of "the mild, but determined integrity of Lord Rockingham." Yet was there, as

that writer elsewhere observes, a degree of "debility" in his virtue : but, the moderation of his character tempered the ardour of Fox, and imposed limits on Burke's enthusiasm.

The state of his frame and health, which, even in his youth had never been robust ; and both which were believed to have suffered severely in consequence of some imprudent gallantries, while pursuing his travels in the south of Italy, at an early period of his life ; incapacitated him for close or continued application, during the short period of his administration. The Princess of Franca Villa was commonly supposed to have bestowed on him the same fatal present, which the "*Belle Ferroniere*" conferred on Francis the First, King of France ; and which, as we learn from *Burnet*, the Countess of Southesk was said to have entailed on James, Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. That princess was still living when I visited Naples, in the year 1779 ; and Sir William Hamilton assured me, that she always expressed the utmost concern for the unintentional misfortune, which the marquis's attachment for her had produced, as well as for its supposed results. Leaving no issue, the greater part of his vast landed property, as well as his borough interests, descended to his nephew, Earl Fitzwilliam. In Lord Rockingham's person, too, became extinct the title and dignity of a British *marquis* ; he being the sole individual in the kingdom who then possessed that high rank ; to which Mr. Pitt has since elevated during his administration, eleven individuals ; besides creating nine *Irish* marquises, where there did not previously exist one peer of that order. Such has been the prodigious increase of peerages during the present reign ! Unquestionably Mr. Pitt, in thus augmenting the numbers of the House of Lords, was not animated by the same intention as the Romans attributed to the first of the Cæsars, when he increased the senate to nine hundred ; or as *Seutonius* expresses it, "*Senatum supplevit.*" But, it will be nevertheless for our descendants to decide, how far he has practically produced a similar effect on the Constitution of Great Britain, with the pernicious consequence which flowed

from the augmentation of the Roman senate by Cæsar.

[2d — 8th July.] However deeply sensible Fox might be to Lord Rockingham's death, and whatever steps he probably contemplated as the natural results of such a blow, he was not so precipitate as to give in his immediate resignation. He remained a member of the cabinet for several days after it took place, and on the 2d of the month, he spoke (for the last time indeed), as secretary of state, from the treasury bench. A bill for the regulation of appointments in the West Indies and America, being then in its progress through the house; it was opposed by Sir George Savile, on a principle of jealous apprehension that we might attempt again to legislate for the colonies, thereby re-asserting a supremacy over them. Lord Shelburne having introduced the bill into the upper house, who was well known to be very averse to the declaration of American independence, that circumstance excited still greater alarm. The attorney general, with the warmth characteristic of all he said or did, endeavoured to allay Sir George's fears. "The wisdom, probity, disinterestedness, and honorable intentions of that noble person," Kenyon observed, "stood so firmly established in the public opinion, that he trusted, no man would venture to reject the motives which had animated him in bringing forward such a measure." But Sir George Savile remaining inflexible, Fox rose, and expressed his astonishment at the incredulity manifested on the subject. While the present ministers enjoyed their sovereign's confidence, no idea," he asserted, "could ever exist of coercing America, or of renewing the system so strongly reprobated by that house. He could not speak peremptorily for every member of the cabinet; but he protested that he would not, himself, remain one minute in administration, after he should discover an intention of bringing back the colonies to obedience, either by force, or by negotiation." Fox even proceeded to prove that, however reluctant the nobleman in question might have been in times past, to the acknowledgment of American independence; yet, a wholesome and salutary revolution had taken place in his principles, from the operation

of events, and of an overpowering necessity. To these assurances and expositions, which were reiterated by General Conway, Sir George Savile at length gave way: but the event proved either that Fox was mistaken, or that Lord Shelburne exhibited a reluctance to concede American independence, which he afterwards renounced, when Fox had quitted the cabinet. Instead of throwing up his place in administration, on a bare suspicion or belief of Lord Shelburne's intentions; he ought (as Pitt told him, a few days afterwards), to have summoned a cabinet council, and there to have ascertained the fact, before he proceeded to extremities. But passion, indignation, and disappointed ambition, mastering his reason, impelled him, regardless of the consequences to himself and to his friends, to retire, rather than submit to the new first lord of the treasury. Pitt, more calm and wise, took Fox's vacant seat, though not his office, in the cabinet: an event which the secretary of state ought to have foreseen, as more than possible; though probably, he was not prepared for it.

If Fox would have submitted to retain his office as secretary of state, under Lord Shelburne, after the decease of the Marquis of Rockingham; it is not to be questioned that the king, whatever personal objections or dislike he might have felt towards him, would from prudential motives, have allowed him to continue in the cabinet. Nor can it admit of a doubt, that Fox, by consenting to hold his own situation, would have induced Lord John Cavendish, over whom he always exercised an unbounded ascendant, to follow his example. Burke, who manifested the greatest reluctance to quit the pay office, required rather to be impelled in making that sacrifice, than appeared to feel any spontaneous disposition towards resigning so lucrative an appointment, of which he had scarcely tasted the first fruits. Fox's private circumstances were moreover so desperate, as to dictate some attention to them; and many of his friends stood in a similar predicament. He did not affect to conceal his own want of fortune, even when addressing the House of Commons. Speaking of the motives that impelled him to resign, and of their imperious

nature, which left him no alternative except quitting office; he added, "Moved by these considerations, though in point of fortune, my condition is not by any means enviable, I have relinquished the pomp, the patronage, and the emolument. — I confess candidly that I have not quitted my place without a pang. I am not such a stoic, as to prefer being neglected, rather than to be courted; to prefer poverty to riches, inconvenience before comfort, or obscurity before power and splendour." It was difficult to designate more eloquently his situation. These expressions fell from him on the 9th of July, in the progress of the interesting discussion that took place relative to Barré's pension. Burke, with less dignity, deplored on the same day, in the same assembly, his ejection from the pay office, and his inability to despise the favours of fortune. "I have," said he, "a family, and my means are small. I like my office. The house, the situation, and all its appendages, cannot be otherwise than pleasing to my taste. All these things I cannot relinquish without regret:—for, the welfare of my family is most dear to me. Who can conceive that I would lightly sacrifice all these things, and four thousand pounds a year?—I have long been surfeited with opposition, and those who know me well, will not denominate me factitious." These lamentations remind us of Pomfret's poem, on Adam's expulsion from Paradise, beginning,

"And must I go, and must I be no more
The tenant of this happy ground."

Burke's condition was in every point of view rendered more critical, in consequence of Lord Rockingham's decease. I have been assured, that nobleman, by his last testamentary dispositions, cancelled all the money due to him by Mr. Burke, amounting to a considerable sum: but did not bequeath him any additional legacy, or pecuniary mark of regard. It was added, that Burke by no means expressed himself satisfied with the marquis's conduct towards him in this respect. Certainly, some of his expressions relative to Lord Rockingham, in his speech to which I have

already alluded, were very singular, and might be regarded as equivocal. "Among the encomiums due to that noble person," said he, "this was one; that he left his best and dearest friends with the simple reward of his own invaluable intimacy. This peculiar test of their sincerity, he demanded while alive; and it was a tax which he imposed on their regard for his memory, when he was no more." Do not these words obscurely designate the fact, that he received no augmentation to his fortune, by Lord Rockingham's will? Embarrassed, nevertheless, as were both his and Fox's private affairs, the resentment of the latter, at seeing the helm of state transferred to Lord Shelburne, when added to his knowledge of the secret machinations which had preceded it, extinguished or superseded every other sentiment in his bosom. He peremptorily demanded, either that the Duke of Portland should be immediately recalled from Ireland, in order to be placed at the head of the treasury, as the representative of the deceased marquis, and the acknowledged chief of the whig party; or he tendered to his majesty his own instant resignation. His offer was accepted: and that of Lord John Cavendish, as chancellor of the exchequer, accompanied it, at the same time.

When, after the lapse of five and thirty years, we calmly examine the motives by which Fox was actuated in thus throwing up his office, we must admit that he consulted more his passions, than his reason; since he lay under no necessity of sacrificing either his country, or his principles, to the preservation of his employment. Lord Shelburne's insincerity or duplicity could not operate to produce the public ruin, except by the measures, that in his capacity of first minister, he might bring forward: and whatever repugnance he might individually feel to grant the American colonies unconditional independence, yet the majority of the cabinet, after Fox's and Lord John Cavendish's secession, compelled him ultimately to adopt that principle. By retaining his place under the new first lord of the treasury, Fox would therefore have secured his adherence to the

late marquis's plans; or, on his departure from them, Fox would have carried parliament and the country with him, by instantly refusing longer to co-operate with a minister, who evaded or declined recognising the sovereignty of the thirteen states. Nor could Lord Keppel and the Duke of Richmond, have then separated themselves from him. If, instead of the violent step that he took, he had acted with temper, he would have advanced the public interests, while he consolidated his own tenure of office. The king and Lord Shelburne, however much they might have desired to dismiss him, could not have ventured on it without a pretence. Pitt might probably have become secretary of state for the home department; and a very strong government must have arisen, from which Lord North, as well as his adherents, would have been altogether excluded. But, in order to have produced this benefit to the state, it was necessary for Fox to begin by obtaining a triumph over himself. He preferred more dictatorial measures, which in the course of a few months, compelled him either to behold his enemy confirmed in power, after making peace, while he himself and his adherents remained on the opposition bench; or, regardless of consequences, to form a junction with Lord North, and storm the cabinet a second time. Such indeed were the injurious results that flowed from his intemperate precipitation.

Fox, in taking this decisive step, probably flattered himself that it would have operated to a wider extent, than actually happened. Though he could not rationally hope that either Lord Camden or the Duke of Grafton would resign; and though he ought not to have supposed that General Conway would lay down his office; since not one of these ministers depended on the late Marquis of Rockingham; yet he certainly calculated that his uncle the Duke of Richmond, as well as Lord Keppel, would imitate his example. In this expectation, he was, however, disappointed. They both expressed, indeed, in the upper house of parliament, their great regret at his secession; but they declined following him out of the cabinet, and stated the motives for their

determination. It remained during some time doubtful, whether Mr. Pitt would have been appointed one of the secretaries of state, or placed in the post of chancellor of the exchequer. The latter employment was finally conferred on him. Mr. Thomas Townsend succeeded Lord Shelburne in the home department; leaving the post of secretary at war to Sir George Younge. The foreign office, vacated by Fox, was last filled up, and given to Lord Grantham. However inferior in energy and brilliancy of intellect to his predecessor, he possessed solid, though not eminent parts; added to a knowledge of foreign affairs and of Europe, having resided several years with great reputation, as ambassador at the court of Madrid.

Two of the lords of the treasury followed Mr. Fox out of office. One, Lord Althorpe, has since filled with honour to himself, and advantage to the public, as Earl Spencer, a high cabinet office under Mr. Pitt's administration. Frederick Montagu, the other, a man equally respectable for probity and for talents, afterwards raised to the dignity of a privy councillor; was a devoted adherent of the Cavendish and Rockingham interest. Mr. Richard Jackson, and Mr. Edward James Eliot, succeeded to these vacancies. The former gentleman, one of Lord Shelburne's intimate friends, bred to the bar, had obtained from the universality of his information on all topics, as I have already had occasion to remark, the appellation of "omniscient Jackson." Mr. Eliot afterwards married Lady Harriet Pitt, sister of the chancellor of the exchequer; and his father early in 1784, was created a peer, while the new first minister had still to contend against a majority in the House of Commons. The remaining member of the treasury board, Mr. James Grenville, whom we have likewise seen elevated by Mr. Pitt to the British peerage, at a later period of his administration; did not think proper to imitate the example of his colleagues. Mr. Thomas Orde, who became one of the two secretaries of the new treasury; like Mr. Grenville, terminated his career as a commoner, on the very same day, fifteen years afterwards, by a removal to the upper house of parliament.

The peerage formed, indeed, the Euthanasia, the natural translation of all Mr. Pitt's favourite adherents, friends, and relations, either by consanguinity, or by alliance. It must be admitted that Mr. Orde had a double pretension to it, from his services, and his matrimonial connexion. While a member of the House of Commons, he had distinguished himself by drawing up more than one of the most able reports of the "secret committee," appointed to enquire into the causes of the war in the Carnatic, of which committee he was a leading member. Mr. Dundas, the chairman, when addressing the house, on the ninth of April, 1782; after paying him the highest compliments for his assiduity and exertions in that capacity, added, "Such, indeed, are the talents which Mr. Orde has exhibited in the business of investigation, that no minister who means to act honestly, can overlook him, or omit to employ his distinguished abilities in the public service." Great, however, as was the testimony of the lord advocate, to his merits, which I am not inclined to dispute, yet his best claim consisted in having married the natural daughter of Charles, Duke of Bolton; in virtue of which union, and from the failure of male issue in the person of the succeeding duke, Mr. Orde became eventually possessed of some of the finest estates of that illustrious family. The title itself, diminished to a barony, was revived in him, together with the name of Powlett. Lord North remained an inactive, though not an unconcerned, or a silent spectator, of this new convulsion in the councils of the crown: which had so soon expelled from the cabinet, one of the two parties, by whom he was himself driven from power. Of all those individuals who had supported his administration, or occupied any eminent situation under it, only two quitted him, in order to be received into Lord Shelburne's confidence and ministry. The lord advocate of Scotland, Mr. Dundas, after eight years adherence, now abandoned altogether his ancient political leader; and imitating the precedent exhibited by Mr. Pitt, took office, by accepting the treasurer-ship of the navy. From this period, those two eminent men continued for the remainder of their lives, inseparable

in good, as well as in adverse fortune. Lord Mulgrave followed Dundas's example. The Duke of Portland, who, as being devoted to the Rockingham interest, and now placed ostensibly at its head, adopted of course Mr. Fox's line of conduct, was succeeded in the lord lieutenancy of Ireland, by Earl Temple; a nobleman of very considerable talents, and great application to business, though, we must admit, inferior in energy of mind and character, to either of his brothers.

[9th July.] The interruption which so important a change in the government, occasioned in the ordinary business of the House of Commons; prevented any discussion from arising in that assembly during some days, relative to the causes and motives of Mr. Fox's resignation. But an occasion soon presented itself, which enabled him to state all his grievances, to unfold some portion of the mystery that pervaded his conduct, and to bring forward the heaviest charges against the new first lord of the treasury. A pension of three thousand two hundred pounds a year, having been granted to Colonel Barré, by the administration of which Lord Rockingham constituted the head; and another very considerable pension being given at the same time, to Lord Ashburton, the two principal friends of Lord Shelburne in both houses of parliament; — these grants, the consideration of which was unexpectedly brought forward, became severely arraigned. It seemed, indeed, impossible not to feel a degree of astonishment, at contemplating such profuse donations of the public money, made by men who condemned Lord North's want of economy; who were with difficulty induced to give a pension of two thousand pounds a year to Lord Rodney, for having defeated the French fleet, and saved Jamaica; who, themselves, had recently reduced the household of the sovereign; and who loudly asserted their personal disinterestedness. Mr. Daniel Parker Coke, a man who, like Kenyon, only took the advice of his own upright and intelligent mind, in all cases of public or parliamentary duty; coming down to the house, without concert of any kind, moved for an address, to request of his majesty to declare, which of his

ministers had *dared* to recommend the grant of the pension in question to Barré. The three lords of the treasury present, having all admitted that it was the Marquis of Rockingham's act; and Frederic Montagu, one of the number, not only justifying it, as a remuneration merited by Barré for his long services in that assembly; but adding, that all he regretted, was his not having signed a warrant for a similar sum, to another distinguished servant of the public, namely, Mr. Burke; Barré himself then rose. In a speech, well conceived, and delivered from the treasury bench, he detailed his military sufferings and renunciations, honorary, as well as pecuniary. The post of adjutant general, and the government of Stirling Castle, both of which offices had been conferred on him by the crown, as a reward for his services under the immortal *Wolfe* in Canada; posts, of which officers were only deprived for military offences; — he had sacrificed. “I was,” said he, “an enemy to general warrants. I voted against them in this house, and for this *political* transgression, I was dismissed, the very next day, from my *military* employments.” — “I should now have been an old lieutenant general. Had I been less a friend to the liberties of the people, my income would have exceeded the pension conferred on me. If, after such sacrifices, I do not merit this provision, let it be curtailed or annihilated.”

I confess that, though I felt no predilection towards Barré, whose manners, like his figure, had in them something approaching to ferocious; yet, these circumstances produced on my mind, a sentiment of conviction or approbation. But, Bamber Gascoyne, who yielded to few men in strong common sense, which he expressed with force and freedom whenever he mixed in debate; attacked both the grant and the administration, with great vivacity. While he candidly admitted the deserts of the person on whom this mark of royal and public bounty had been conferred, he loudly inveighed against such profusion on the part of men, who, while out of office, had condemned the late ministers for making similar remunerations; and who, since they had been, themselves, in power, though only for a few weeks,

had practised all the faults that they previously reprehended. “The people,” exclaimed he, “will soon know how to form a just estimate of them. They declare that their predecessors have left the exchequer empty, and the finances exhausted. Yet they heap new burthens upon us. They accused the last cabinet of want of unanimity. But what is the state of the present cabinet? Is there any union of opinion there? Yet his majesty's late servants have not made the slightest attempt to impede their measures or negotiation. This discord is the more culpable and dangerous at the present moment, when the combined navies, superior to our own fleet under Lord Howe's command, are perhaps upon our coasts. A lord of the treasury expresses his concern, at not having signed a warrant for a pension to another honorable member, whose talents and merits, I own to be most eminent. Why, Mr. Speaker, I have served the public for twenty years, and I have got no pension! If such large pecuniary compensations are to be given to every individual of conspicuous desert, where is the financier who can provide funds adequate to the demand?”

Under accusations so severe, as well as just, the late secretary of state could not remain silent, even had he so inclined. Having resigned his office four days previous to the discussion then agitated, he had relapsed into a private member of parliament; and as such, had resumed his ancient seat on the opposition side of the house, as well as his former *costume*. Lord John Cavendish and Burke were likewise seated near him, as they had been previous to the change of administration. So soon did Fox find himself restored to his former position in that assembly. Below him sate Lord North; and this approximation, the first that took place between them, led the way to a closer connection in the course of a short space of time. No man could contemplate the late premier, now reduced, like Fox, to a simple individual; the one of whom, four months earlier, occupied the first place in the cabinet, while the other had only just resigned the seals of his department; without making some reflections on the mutability of human

greatness. It might have afforded a salutary lesson to ambition, if any lessons or examples could serve as checks on that passion. Fox rising, and directing his discourse not less to Bamber Gascoyne, than to Mr. Coke, admitted that the deceased marquis, his friend, had concurred in recommending the pensions conferred on Lord Ashburton, and on Barré : but he entreated the house to observe, that while Lord Shelburne's adherents received such distinguishing marks of the bounty of the crown ; the followers of Lord Rockingham, many of whom could plead equal merit, and equal want, remained without provision of any kind.

After thus in some measure removing the odium attached to the act, from that party of which he formed a member ; he indirectly accused the new first minister, of the most unworthy duplicity, of the complete abandonment of every political principle on which he professed to have come into office, and of an intention to protect, as well as to shelter East Indian delinquents. Having next enumerated the great points on which Lord Shelburne and he had differed in the cabinet, among which he particularly specified the question of conceding independence to America ; he concluded by heaping upon that nobleman, imputations more severe and humiliating, if possible, than the charges with which, during many years, he had profusely loaded Lord North. In the warmth of his indignation, he even ventured to predict the probability, that with a view to maintain possession of the power so acquired, Lord Shelburne would not scruple to apply for support, to the very men, whom the house and the nation, had recently driven from their official situations. He unfortunately did not then foresee, that within seven months from the time when he was speaking, he should, himself, in order to re-enter the cabinet, form a junction with the expelled minister, whom he had so long held up to national resentment, and towards whom he still professed the utmost alienation. Such were the inconsistencies and contradictions, into which the ambition of Fox betrayed him ; and from which, all the splendour of his talents could not extri-

cate his public character, without eventually incurring imputations, nearly as heavy as those which he lavished on his political opposition.

I should find it difficult to convey any adequate idea of this debate, or rather, discussion ; which, during the far greater part of the time it lasted, had not the slightest reference, nor made the smallest allusion to the ostensible subject before the house, Barré's pension. In defiance of order, it was maintained for three or four hours, in the shape of a conversation or dialogue, carried on between Fox and General Conway exclusively ; the speaker and the members present, who were very numerous (especially if the advanced season of the year be considered) ; acquiescing in a total departure from the question under examination, from motives of curiosity. Never, perhaps, were political disclosures more delicate and interesting, made within those walls ! Fox, in violation of the secrecy which his late situation seemed to impose on him ; anxious to justify his own violent and precipitate conduct, by accusing Lord Shelburne of a dereliction of principles embraced by the whole cabinet ; lifted up the veil from before it, and laid it in some measure open to general view. There were certain parts of his justification, I own, that carried conviction or approbation with them : but he by no means succeeded in persuading the majority of his hearers, that he had acted wisely, temperately, or from necessity, in hastily throwing up his office. We may safely pronounce that disappointment, not patriotism, animated him to that improvident step, though he might really believe that Lord Shelburne did not mean to concede independence to America.

In reply to Mr. Gascoyne's accusation, that the new administration was not less divided than their predecessors, Fox observed, that he had blamed Lord North for having remained in place, after he found himself at the head of distracted councils. "As soon as I discovered," said he, "that I stood in a similar situation, I could not remain a member of the cabinet, without committing an act of treachery to my country, when measures, dangerous, if not fatal, were meditated." — "I declare, that I have only

resigned, because I believe a new system is about to be adopted; or rather, the ancient system revived. I feel it indispensable to come forward, to ring the alarm bell, and to warn the country that the old system is to be pursued; probably, with *the former men*; or, indeed, with any men that can be found for the purpose." — "The *principles* of the late ministry are now in the cabinet; and the next thing that I expect, is to see *the late ministers themselves* replaced in office." — All that is great and good in the kingdom, has approved my retreat. My noble friend (Lord John Cavendish), has likewise given in his resignation; and the public will infer, that when such a character has quitted the cabinet, no man of character ought to remain in it." — "I now retire with a few select friends, to a strong hold, were I confidently expect all my old companions to join me, some sooner, and some later in the day." — "On the demise of the Marquis of Rockingham, all men's eyes were directed to the Duke of Portland. But instead of that noble person, the Earl of Shelburne has been selected." Then, having inveighed against the new first lord of the treasury, as the reverse of his predecessor; as a nobleman who neither regarded promises, nor engagements, nor systems, nor principles, provided that by abandoning or violating them, he could acquire and retain power; I doubt not," added he, "that in order to secure himself in office, he will have recourse to every means that corruption can procure. And I expect that he will shortly be joined by *those very men, whom the house has recently precipitated from their seats.*" Yet, after having thus repeatedly denounced the late ministers, and warned the country of the impending danger from their being again taken into power; by one of those contradictions common to Fox, he concluded with declaring, that "as to any apprehensions of letting in the old administration, he entertained none; because the House of Commons would not suffer it; the people would not suffer it; indeed no man would be bold enough to attempt it."

The members of the new administration diverged on this occasion, in widely different lines. General Conway, with

the "undetermined discretion" imputed to him by "Junius," contented himself by endeavouring to justify his own line of conduct, and that of the cabinet ministers who had declined to imitate the example of Fox; which he did, rather with caution and delicacy, than with any asperity or acrimony. With solemn protestations he declared, that he had not been able to discover the slightest intention on the part of the new first minister, to abandon the principles upon which the administration was originally constituted. Those principles he recapitulated, one by one; the first and most essential of which, forming the basis of all their measures or deliberations, was the concession of unconditional independence to America, as the leading step to peace. Whenever he should find any ground for suspicion, that the Earl of Shelburne designed to adopt another system, he protested that he would not remain for a day, or for an hour, in the cabinet. He lamented the recent division and secession in his majesty's councils, as well as the loss of ability sustained by Fox's resignation. Yet he saw no reason to apprehend that the successor of the noble marquis deceased, would fail to pursue the true interests of his country. Throughout every part of Conway's speech, a desire to avoid coming to extremities with Fox, was strongly marked. But Pitt, now seated on the treasury bench, and on the point of accepting the office of chancellor of the exchequer, observing none of these personal managements; boldly accused the late secretary of state with sacrificing his country, to his ambition, his interest, or his enmities; charged him as being at variance, not with principles or measures, but with men; and claimed the support of the house no longer than he should maintain that system, on which the late administration had been driven from power.

"The right honorable secretary assures us," said he, "that it was with the sole view of preventing dissensions in the cabinet, he retired from office. I believe him, because he solemnly declares it. Otherwise I should have attributed his resignation, to a *baulk in struggling for power.* If, however, he so much disliked Lord Shelburne's po-

litical principles or opinions, why did he ever consent to act with that nobleman, as a colleague? And if he only *suspected* Lord Shelburne of feeling averse to the measures which he thought necessary to be adopted; it was his duty to have called a cabinet council, and there to have *ascertained* the fact, before he took the hasty resolution of throwing up his employment. I can assure him that I entertain no such suspicions. If I did, no man would be more averse to supporting the present ministry than myself. I am a determined enemy to the late ruinous system; and if I should act in any capacity under the administration of the present day, whenever I see things going on wrong, I will first endeavour to set them right. — Should I fail in the attempt, then, and not before, I will resign." Perhaps, in no transaction of their whole political lives, was the distinction between Fox and Pitt more strikingly exhibited, than in the resignation of the former, and the acceptance of office by the latter, in July, 1782. The judgment, patience, and self-command of Pitt, enabled him at three and twenty, to mount over Fox's shoulders, to enter the cabinet, and in less than eighteen months to fill Lord Shelburne's vacant place, which he held for seventeen years; while his antagonist, though he twice forced his way into the councils of the sovereign, knew not how to maintain himself in that elevation.

Lord John Cavendish, though he had recently filled so high an office in administration, and though he had resigned, like Fox; yet took little part in the debate relative to Barré's pension. He however confirmed the late secretary's declaration to a certain degree, respecting Lord Shelburne's intentions as to America: but he appeared to act only on belief, not on proof. Indeed, he always seemed to be either propelled or restrained at pleasure by Fox, who held Lord John constantly before him, as a political screen. Burke, however, made ample amends for the defect of communication on the part of the late chancellor of the exchequer; and in defiance of the impatience manifested by the house, inveighed with equal violence and indecorum, against the new first lord of the treasury, whom he depicted as unworthy of

the national confidence. "I invoke heaven and earth," exclaimed he, "to witness, that I fully believe the present ministry will prove infinitely worse than that of the noble lord, who has been so lately reprobated and driven from employment!" After treating Conway with great severity of animadversion, for trusting to Lord Shelburne's assurances or professions; and comparing the general to the little *Red Riding Hood* in *Æsop*, who mistook a wolf for her grandmother; Burke demanded, "Whether if he had lived in the time of Cicero, he would have taken *Catiline* for his colleague in the office of consul, after he had heard his guilt clearly demonstrated by that illustrious orator? Would he become a co-partner with *Borgia* in his political schemes, after reading of his nefarious principles in *Machiavel*?" — "If the Earl of Shelburne," added he, "be not a *Catiline* or a *Borgia* in morals, it must be solely ascribed to the superiority of his understanding." These invectives, which only proved the extent of Burke's enmity of his regret at quitting the pay office, made little impression on his hearers. Lee, who had filled the situation of solicitor general under the late administration, but who had quitted his employment at the same time with the other adherents of the deceased marquis; — a man of strong intellectual parts, though of coarse manners, and who never hesitated to clothe his ideas in the coarsest language; may be said to have terminated this curious and interesting conversation. His indecorous abuse of the new first minister, though couched in a more homely garb, and not illustrated by any classical or historical allusions, exceeded in violence even the declamation of Burke. Like him, Lee levelled his reflections and accusations, not against the ability nor talents of the earl, but against his principles of political and moral action. He fully admitted that nobleman's external accomplishments, specious talents, and comprehensive information. Mr. Coke having withdrawn his motion on Barré's pension, the house broke up: but from that evening, the country and parliament beheld for the first time, two individuals, who might hitherto be said to have

fought under the same standard, openly opposed to each other; and who were destined never more, during their lives, under any change of circumstances, to act in political union. In fact, from this period, though Lord North remained ostensibly at the head of one great party, and though Lord Shelburne, who occupied the place of first minister, was nominally the chief of another; yet they ceased to be considered as the principal personages in the state. Pitt and Fox attracted far more attention, were regarded by the nation at large, no less than by parliament, as rival candidates for the future government of the country.

[10th and 11th July.] Lord Shelburne, when speaking in the House of Peers on the subject of the pension granted to Barré, which excited the greatest comment, endeavoured to shift the origin, and consequently the odium of having conferred it, on Lord Rockingham. In this attempt he proved, however, eminently unfortunate, as his assertions on the subject produced the most unqualified contradiction from the connexions or adherents of the deceased marquis. Burke and Fox, both, denied it in the strongest terms; calling at the same time on Lord John Cavendish to confirm their declarations on the point. His testimony, which was very vague, added little force to their previous protestations: but it was natural to suppose that the proposition must have originated with Lord Shelburne, the patron, friend, and protector of Barré. Yet that nobleman, when addressing the House of Peers, not only asserted that the deceased marquis first proposed the idea; but added, that he had in his possession a letter from Lord Rockingham on the subject, completely proving his assertion. The new first minister, in a long, able, and laboured address, endeavoured likewise to impress his audience with a conviction, that Fox, in his secession from the cabinet, could have had no other motive, except disappointed ambition and rivalry. Fox, however, not only treated the insinuation with indignant contempt and a positive denial in the House of Commons on the subsequent day: he likewise, by the mouth of the Earl of Derby, in the upper house, where Lord

Shelburne was present, declared it "to be contrary to fact, and a direct deviation from the truth." Not satisfied with so public a contradiction, Lord Derby called on the other members of administration who were in their places, to state their personal information, and to give evidence on the point. Thus compelled, the Duke of Richmond and Lord Keppel rose, and admitted that the late secretary of state had differed in sentiment from Lord Shelburne on subjects of great importance, *previous to Lord Rockingham's decease*. They likewise added, that in consequence of finding himself in a minority on the matter then agitated in the cabinet, Fox had declared his intention to resign his office.

After so clear and distinct a testimony, it became impossible to doubt or to deny the fact; especially as neither Lord Camden, nor Lord Ashburton, who were both in the house at the time, disputed the authenticity of the two noble witnesses. However painful or humiliating these contradictions must have been, which impeached Lord Shelburne's personal veracity, equally as a man, and as a minister; he nevertheless submitted to them, without making any further effort to justify himself in the opinion of the public: and the circumstances that attended the prorogation of parliament, seemed to indicate his impatience under the deliberations of that assembly, as well as his apprehensions of the impression made on many individuals, by Fox's accusations. Lord Shelburne's courage, which was unquestionable, had been proved in the duel that he fought with Colonel Fullerton. It became therefore impossible to suppose, that he would have tamely endured such imputations on his private character, if he had possessed the means of effectually repelling or disproving them. Even on the subject of granting American independence, there appeared so much ambiguity, if not tergiversation and contradiction in all his parliamentary speeches, as greatly tended to persuade mankind, that Fox's allegations respecting Lord Shelburne's disinclination to concede the point, must have had a foundation in truth. The very principle on which he avowed, when addressing the House of Peers, that he retained his place in the coun-

cils of the crown, seemed scarcely compatible with strict regard to political rectitude. For he declared, in the plainest language that he was not only adverse in his own judgment, to acknowledging the independence of the thirteen colonies; but that whenever such a recognition should be extorted from this country, "The sun of British glory would have set." Yet in the same moment he admitted, that as the majority of the Rockingham cabinet were of an opposite opinion, he should acquiesce in the measure; which measure, though destructive, as he conceived, to Great Britain, he was now ready, in his new capacity, if parliament approved it, to carry into execution.

No political imputation, affixed on Lord North, had operated with more force in his disfavour, on the minds of the public, than the assertion of his enemies, that he prosecuted the American war in opposition to his own conviction, from a love of place, or from unworthy subservience to the royal will. But to a similar charge, the new first minister appeared in some measure voluntarily to subject himself. He might however plead, as he did in fact assert, when addressing the House of Peers, that, "however dreadful the impending disaster would prove, as he believed, to his country; however much he deprecated and deplored it, and whatever efforts he had made to prevent it; yet that an overpowering and insurmountable necessity compelled him to become the agent for carrying into effect so destructive a measure." He even succeeded, as we know, in surmounting the king's repugnance to the final separation of America from the British empire. Fox, therefore, if he had not been impelled by animosity to Lord Shelburne, and by a determination not to remain in the cabinet, unless the Duke of Portland was placed at the head of administration, might have continued in office, without abandoning any principle. He preferred a more violent alternative. His friends, as well as the daily newspapers attached to his party, joined in accusing the new first minister of having undermined Lord Rockingham in the royal esteem, by the most unworthy arts, in order to get possession of his office; while political caricatures,

exhibited in the shops of the metropolis, represented Lord Shelburne habited as *Guy Faux*, so notorious for the part that was assigned him in the "gunpowder plot," under James the First; holding a dark lanthorn in his hand, advancing under cover of the night, to blow up the treasury.

Such were the circumstances under which commenced that nobleman's administration. Even down to the last moment that the House of Commons remained sitting, Burke, among the querulous lamentations that he uttered, on being so suddenly ejected from his office of paymaster of the forces; — a misfortune which seemed deeply to affect him; — mingled the loudest exclamations against the falsity and defect of principle in the first minister. His *philippic* was cut short in the middle, by the arrival of Sir Francis Molineux, as usher of the black rod, sent to summon the attendance of the members, at the bar of the House of Lords; where the king, already seated on the throne, was ready to prorogue the parliament. A singular fact, arising out of the late reforms, accompanied this ceremony. Among the retrenchments of the royal household and dignity, which Burke's bill had made, was included, as has been already observed, the suppression of the jewel office; the business of which department was principally conducted by Mr. William Egerton, a relation of the Duke of Bridgewater, and a member of the House of Commons. The bill having so recently passed into a law, no new official regulation had as yet been adopted, for the removal or transportation of the paraphernalia of the crown. On the occasion of his majesty going to Westminster, to prorogue the two houses, it became indispensable to convey thither the crown and sceptre, together with various other articles of state. The master of the jewel office being suppressed, in whose department these dispositions previously lay; application was made both to the lord steward, and to the lord chamberlain, praying that orders might be issued to the keeper of the jewels in the tower, for bringing them to Westminster on the day of the prorogation. But those great officers of state, not conceiving themselves to pos-

sess a power of interference, directions were at length despatched for the purpose, from the home secretary of state's office. After some consultation held, relative to the safest mode of conveying the royal ornaments; none of the king's carriages being sent to receive them, application was next made to the magistrates at Bow-street, who detached four or five stout agents of the police, for their protection. Two hackney coaches being provided, in which the various articles were placed; with a view to render the transportation of them more private, the procession set out circuitously from the tower, by the new road; entering London again at Portland-street, and so proceeded down to Westminster. The blinds were kept up the whole way; and after the prorogation, they returned by the same road, without experiencing any accident. But it is unquestionable, that eight or ten desperate fellows, had they been apprised of the circumstance, might have easily overpowered the persons employed, and have carried off the jewels. The memorable enterprise of Colonel Blood, under Charles the Second, who got hold of the crown and sceptre, though he ultimately failed in retaining possession of them, was in fact, a far more hazardous undertaking; as, in order to execute it, he lay under the necessity of entering the tower: whereas, in the present instance, the attempt might have been made in the street, or in the new road. Any accident of the kind, had it taken place, would necessarily have thrown some degree of ridicule, as well as of blame, on a system of economy, productive of such consequences in its outset.

Among the interesting features of the session of parliament before us, which, on account of a degree of mystery or ambiguity accompanying them, greatly exercised national curiosity; may be reckoned the proceedings commenced against Sir Thomas Rumbold. I say, commenced, because they never were prosecuted to any consummation. This gentleman returned, as has been already mentioned, from Madras, early in 1781, under imputations the most injurious to his fame. He was accused of having, while governor of that important settlement, not only amassed by every unbe-

coming means, an immense fortune; but of first provoking a war with Hyder Ally, by acts of imprudent aggression, and then of abandoning the country entrusted to his care, with pusillanimous or interested precipitation. These charges, which were solemnly brought against him by Mr. Dundas, lord advocate of Scotland, as chairman of the secret committee appointed by the House of Commons, to enquire into the causes of the war in the Carnatic, produced a deep impression on the public mind. We have already seen the steps which were immediately adopted by the legislature, to tie up and impound Sir Thomas's person, as well as his fortune. But in addition to these precautions, a bill for inflicting on him pains and penalties, as a man who had been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, was introduced by Mr. Dundas himself.

Such a measure, which excited general approbation, appeared to be worthy the national justice, exerted in punishing a great public culprit. The line of active and ambitious policy pursued by Hastings, when governor-general of Bengal, might possibly have led to many misfortunes, and might, perhaps, merit condemnation. But his motives were admitted, even by his enemies, to have been splendid and elevated, however pernicious, as they asserted, in their operation or consequences. The mal-administration of Rumbold, on the contrary, seemed only directed to sordid and selfish purposes. Every party, it was therefore hoped, would concur in carrying through such a bill; and though Mr. Dundas, after the termination of Lord North's ministry, no longer acted in an official situation, yet, in his capacity of chairman of "the secret committee," he spoke from a greater eminence, and might expect universal support. Least of all, it was supposed, could the Rockingham party, who had just come into power, who professed to call to a severe account, all such as had plundered or injured the country, and who loudly demanded an enquiry into East India delinquencies, attempt to throw obstacles in the path of justice. Under these circumstances, all men expected, and most men hoped, that the bill in question would have speedily found its way

through the House of Commons, and have finally passed into a law. The fact, nevertheless, turned out completely otherwise. Meanwhile the session advanced: a full attendance, as Mr. Duncan asserted and complained, could not be procured: the house was frequently counted out; and whether from the operation of that cause, or from any other reason more concealed, no rapid progress was made in the business. Sir Thomas Rumbold's person and property remained, it is true, sequestered or restrained; but beyond that temporary interposition, no permanent punishment was inflicted on him.

Men who had anticipated much more vigorous and speedy, as well as decisive proceedings, and who beheld the supposed criminal thus elude or escape, as it were, the grasp of national pursuit; reasoned and commented on the fact. Malignity or credulity invented reasons for whatever appeared inexplicable throughout the transaction. Secret springs were asserted to have been touched, which had arrested or paralyzed the exertions of the prosecutor. Time, place, and circumstances, were even particularized; all which, though perhaps untrue or imaginary, seemed nevertheless, not only in themselves, possible, but so well fabricated, and so minutely detailed, as to appear highly probable. I shall, however, relate only such facts as are unquestionably authentic.

Rumbold, though a man of low extraction, and of a mean education, did not by any means want activity, judgment, or talents. I knew him well. In his person he was well made and handsome; but his features, though regular and manly, contained nothing in them prepossessing. His successful exertions, while governor of Madras, in reducing Pondicherry, had elevated him to the dignity of a baronet. On his arrival in England, aware of the storm that impended over him, he immediately contrived to get into parliament; and he soon afterwards brought his eldest son into the House of Commons; by which means he came into daily collision and communication with those, who might either injury, or could defend him. That he was not idle, is certain; and he attempted in his place, as a member of

the house, to justify himself from the charges exhibited against him, with some ability. In addition, however, to these personal efforts, he soon found means to conciliate a friend, who was supposed to have laboured efficaciously towards his extrication.

That friend, I mean, Mr. Rigby, the late paymaster of the forces, having enjoyed during a great number of years, one of the most profitable places under the crown, without any colleague, had acquired a large fortune. But his luxurious and expensive manner of living in town; his magnificent seat at Mistley Hall in Essex, where he maintained a splendid establishment of every kind; when added to his purchases of landed property, had exhausted even means so vast, and left him, as it were, necessitous in the midst of wealth. In this situation of his affairs, the sudden termination of Lord North's administration, not only deprived him of his employment; but in consequence of the system of reform adopted by the new ministers, and in particular from the regulations introduced by Burke, his successor in the pay-office, which compelled him to pay into the exchequer, the immense balances of public money remaining in his hands; Rigby became involved in great pecuniary embarrassments. These balances having been vested by him in mortgages, or in other securities; and the public funds suffering then under great depression, it could not be in fact an easy matter, to find the means of answering promptly the demands made upon him by government, for repayment.

Rumbold had brought with him from the east, as Verres did from Sicily, very ample resources, which he well knew how to use, in time of need, for his own protection; and Rigby's situation, which was generally understood, might render a loan of money peculiarly convenient. That gentleman having no children, his sister's son was destined to inherit his name and property. Rumbold had a daughter, whose age and accomplishments qualified her to be united to him in marriage. The alliance being agreed on, it was supposed that by the secret articles, the East India governor advanced to his friend, such a sum, as greatly facilitated those payments of

the public money, which he was necessitated to furnish without delay. After entering into so close a connection, cemented by such binding ties, it might be esteemed natural, and even venial, that Rigby should lend his reciprocal aid to Sir Thomas Rumbold. Though no longer paymaster of the forces, Rigby still possessed great capacities of being useful; and he was not supposed to lie under the dominion of any fastidious scruples. Above all, his intimate friendship with Mr. Dundas, who took the lead in the parliamentary prosecution instituted against Rumbold, might enable Rigby to find means and opportunities of diminishing those prejudices, or softening those impressions, that operated most injuriously against the accused person. No proof has indeed ever produced, that improper means were used to effect this object; nor do I believe that any such were employed; but the public being in possession of certain facts, and observing that the proceedings so vigorously begun in parliament against Rumbold, seemed unaccountably to languish, and eventually to expire towards the close of the session of 1783, though they were nominally renewed when the house met in the subsequent month of December; inferred, perhaps very unjustly, that there must exist some latent cause, which had blunted the edge of the weapon. Rumbold, it is certain, was finally extricated; but whether the ostensible reasons assigned for deferring the bill of pain and penalties, formed the only circumstances that conduced to his escape; or, whether more efficacious and cogent arguments of any kind were used, must always remain matter of conjecture and assertion, like many other obscure points of biographical history.

[15th — 31st of July.] The session being now terminated, Lord Shelburne might be regarded as secure in the possession of his newly acquired power, at least for several months. During that interval, means, it was naturally imagined, could easily be discovered, of cementing and confirming the ministry. Negotiations for peace were already begun with America, which, if successful, it was probable, must eventually lead to a treaty with our European ene-

mies. The talents of the first lord of the treasury, were considered as eminently adapted to diplomatic discussions; in the conduct of which, his enlarged knowledge of the foreign interests of Great Britain, and his minute acquaintance with the continental courts, enabled him, it was said, to act at once with vigour and perspicuity. If he had lost the abilities of Fox and Burke in the House of Commons, he had, on the other hand, secured and attached to him two men, no less able in different ways; Pitt and Dundas. He moreover possessed the confidence of the sovereign; who, as all men supposed, would, from necessity, if not from inclination, support a minister preferred by himself to his present office. Lord North might even, it was hoped, feel a far stronger disposition to join the actual administration, whenever parliament should meet again, than to unite with the Rockingham party, his inveterate enemies. Under this aspect of public affairs, though Lord Shelburne neither stood as high in the national opinion, for severe integrity and probity, as his deceased predecessor, the Marquis of Rockingham, had done; nor could command that parliamentary strength, which Lord North still in some measure influenced or led; yet many persons considered his tenure of office as by no means precarious, and augured well of its duration.

Burke's invectives against the first minister, which continued to the last instant that the forms of parliament permitted, were nevertheless suspended while the prorogation put an end to the business of the House of Commons. However violent he might be in his place, as a member of the legislature, Burke never carried his complaints to the people. But, Fox, who acted no less as a demagogue, than as the representative of Westminster; and who always seemed to take the Gracchi for his model; anxious to appeal from his late dismissal by the king, to the popular suffrage, convoked his constituents, in order to lay before them the reasons for his resignation. They met, almost immediately after the session closed, in Westminster Hall, where he reiterated all the heads of accusation against Lord

Shelburne, which he had already detailed a few days before, in the House of Commons : but, the general impression, even among that audience, which heard him with partiality, seemed nevertheless to be, that personal ambition and rivalry, more than real principle or patriotism, had regulated his conduct. The specious pretence under which the meeting was assembled, namely, that of petitioning the crown for a more equal representation of the people ; produced, however, as might have been expected, an unanimous assent. He then dismissed them till the ensuing winter.

[August.] Sir Samuel Hood, whom the victorious admiral in the West Indies, detached a few days after the defeat of De Grasse, with several vessels, in pursuit of the flying enemy ; having come up with some of them, captured two more French line of battle ships, as well as two frigates, off the east end of the island of St. Domingo. Though these eminent naval advantages, secured Jamaica from invasion or attack, yet, far from regaining any of our insular possessions in that quarter of the globe, on the contrary, such was our state of exhaustion, that Spain fitted out an expedition against the Bahama islands, which she easily reduced to her obedience. But, the attention of the capital and the nation became more powerfully, as well as painfully attracted, by the catastrophe of the “ Royal George,” which took place about the same time, than by the loss of any transatlantic settlements. This ship, the pride and ornament of the British navy, to the disgrace of a nation considered as superior to every other people in nautical skill, disappeared in an instant, on the 29th of August, as is well known, at Spithead ; carrying with her to the bottom, an English admiral, and as it was computed, nearly a thousand persons of both sexes. I was well acquainted with Kempenfeldt, one of the most able, as well as scientific officers in the British naval service. It is impossible, even at this distance of time, to reflect on such an event, which resulted from the injudicious or careless manner of laying down the “ Royal George,” without amazement as well as horror. The gloom and consternation, diffused by the intelligence over the me-

ropolis, are hardly to be conceived ; and the incredibility of the fact increased the sense of the disaster. No parallel circumstance is to be found in our naval annals : probably not in those of any other European nation. In a superstitious age, it would, no doubt, have been considered as ominous of the greatest national, or royal misfortunes. That tempests, fire, or rocks and quicksands, should swallow up and destroy the proudest works of human art, is natural ; often, unavoidable. When Sir Cloudesley Shovel, under the reign of Queen Anne, perished, together with his ship and all his crew, wrecked on the Scilly islands ; or when the “ Victory,” under George the Second, foundered in the race of Alderney, with Admiral Balchen, and eleven hundred persons on board : — such calamities were in the order of things, however much to be deplored. But, in the present instance, only an utter disregard to common prudential precautions, could have produced an event so unprecedented. Her very *name*, and her superiority in size, as well as in strength, to every other ship in the service, she carrying a hundred guns ; added to the bitterness of the reflections which her loss occasioned throughout the kingdom. Those who recollect that the “ Queen Charlotte,” a man of war of the first rate, carrying one hundred and ten guns, with an admiral’s flag, was consumed by somewhat similar negligence, together with near seven hundred of her crew, on the 17th of March, 1800, near the port of Leghorn ; may find ample reason for speculation, on the singularity of two such disastrous events having taken place within eighteen years of each other, under the same reign.

[September.] The melancholy impression made by the catastrophe just related, became, if possible, still more strongly excited immediately afterwards, by other naval misfortunes equally afflicting in their nature. If the fact of the “ Royal George” going down at her anchors, when no danger was even apprehended, stands without precedent in our maritime records ; the fatality which seemed to pursue the ships of the line that had been captured by Rodney on the 12th of April, as well as most of our own men of war, accompanying the

French prizes, on their return from the West Indies; can scarcely be equalled in modern history. The chain of shipwrecks and adverse events, that attended Commodore Anson's expedition round Cape Horn, under the late reign, which so greatly reduced the numbers of his squadron; even the disasters, so pathetically related in the same work, that ruined the fleet of the Spanish Admiral Pizarro, nearly in the same latitudes, and at the same time;—those calamities, however extraordinary and tragical they appear, yet sink on a comparison with the destruction experienced by our devoted ships, in 1782, when crossing the Atlantic. Captain Inglefield has commemorated the fate of the "Centaur," as well as his own astonishing escape, when she foundered with her officers and crew. That affecting narrative may serve as too faithful a picture of the misfortunes experienced by the other vessels. The "Ramillies," a name proverbially unfortunate in the English navy, was set on fire, when it became impossible any longer either to navigate, or to preserve her. One of the French ships of the line, the "Hector," seemed to be reserved for more severe trials of every kind; in the course of which, all that human fortitude, skill, and courage, when combined, could effect, was performed by our officers and seamen. They were, almost miraculously, saved, though the "Hector" herself perished.

Over the closing scene of the "Ville de Paris," as well as over the fate of the *Glorieux*, an impenetrable curtain is drawn. It is certain that the last named vessel, a French seventy-four gun ship, commanded by the honorable Captain Cadogan, disappeared during the middle watch, on the night of the 17th or 18th of September, after firing many signals of distress. Her lights had been visible till that time; but when day appeared, no vestiges of her were discovered, and she doubtless foundered during the storm. Nor was De Grasse's ship, originally purchased with so vast an effusion of blood, and herself the pride of the French navy, ever destined to reach an English port. The hasty repairs given her at Jamaica, could only be slight or partial; and it was confidently asserted,

that during the gale of wind which proved so fatal, her guns breaking loose, tore open her side, and accelerated, if they did not cause, her final destruction. Tidings of her were long expected, and the nation continued to nourish hopes for many months, of her re-appearance. About this time, while her fate still remained problematical, a man was brought to the admiralty, and there examined, who had been taken up at sea, nearly senseless and extenuated; tied to, or floating on a hen-coop. He asserted, and his testimony appeared to be entitled to credit; that he served on board the "Ville de Paris," as a common sailor, at the moment when she foundered. But few, or no particulars relative to the event itself, could be extracted from this survivor; who, as I was assured by a flag officer that questioned him, possessed neither faculties nor memory to recount almost any circumstance, except the fact of her loss. Admiral Graves, who commanded the fleet, was censured by the popular voice, for having stood some degrees more to the northward, in returning home across the Atlantic, at that season, than he needed to have done; or than he was warranted in doing by Lord Rodney's orders. But this accusation may possibly have been more severe than just; though I think I have heard Lord Rodney himself state the circumstance, and express his conviction of the injurious consequences that resulted from navigating in too high a latitude, during a time of equinoctial gales.

Happily, the gloom which these melancholy events diffused, was speedily relieved and dissipated, by transactions of the most exhilarating nature. Minorca, it is true, had surrendered early in the summer; but Gibraltar, which fortress still resisted every attack, attracted, no less from the prodigious means employed for its reduction by the enemy, than from the energy and activity exerted in its defence, the attention of all Europe. The two most memorable sieges which are recorded in modern history; namely, that of Antwerp, undertaken by Alexander Farnese, Prince of Parma, under Philip the Second, in the sixteenth century; and that of Ostend, begun by the Spanish general, Spinola, only a few years later; however illustrious

they have each been rendered from the long protracted resistance made by the besieged, were both finally crowned with success. Gibraltar, on the contrary, repelled the assailants in the most brilliant manner. All the means that human art, expense, and force, could collect or combine, by land, as well as by sea, were accumulated under its walls: while the two branches of the House of Bourbon, unconscious of the lamentable destiny preparing for themselves in the womb of time, seemed to vie in their efforts to accelerate its fall. Charles the Third, who then reigned in Spain, already anticipated the completion of an event, which, as he justly conceived, would render his name and reign immortal in the Spanish annals. Under the same fallacious expectation, Louis the Sixteenth despatched his youngest brother, Count D'Artois, to assist at its surrender: while the Barbary powers, though by no means indifferent, or uninterested spectators of this great contest, and though they are said to have put up prayers in all their mosques for our success; yet quietly expected the result, without making the smallest effort in our favour.

If Lord Rodney acquired so much personal glory by his victory over De Grasse, General Elliott did not establish a less brilliant reputation, by his repulse and defeat of the Spanish floating batteries, on the 13th of September, of the same year. The American war, which at Saratoga, and at York Town, displayed spectacles so humiliating to the British arms, terminated with the most splendid triumphs over our European enemies; and this portion of the reign of George the Third (like the second Punic war in antiquity), exhibits between 1777 and 1782, the greatest reverses of adverse, and of prosperous fortune. While we lost so vast an empire beyond the Atlantic, we humbled with one hand, the French naval force in the West Indies; annihilating with the other, the combined efforts of France and Spain, which were concentrated for the subjugation of a distant garrison, apparently left to its own capacities of defence, and cut off from the obvious means of relief. But even after

the destruction of the Spanish vessels and batteries, it seemed still impossible to throw into Gibraltar, timely supplies of ammunition, competent to recruit the expenditure that had taken place during the siege. Provisions, fuel, clothing, as well as many other essential or indispensable articles, could only be sent out from England. Near fifty French and Spanish ships of the line, which occupied the bay of Gibraltar, appeared to set at defiance all approach. Notwithstanding these apparently insuperable obstacles, the attempt succeeded, in opposition to every impediment.

[October.] So low had sunk the numerical naval force of Great Britain at this period, as compared with the strength of the enemy, that the utmost exertions of the admiralty, under the new administration, could only equip and send to sea, thirty-four sail of the line; which fleet did not quit Spithead, till nearly the day on which General Elliott had already repulsed and burnt the floating batteries, under the walls of the besieged fortress. Yet, never was the real superiority of our navy in skill and science, more evidently demonstrated, than in successfully throwing succours into a place invested by sea and land without committing any event to hazard, or affording to adversaries so numerous, the slightest advantage. Lord Howe, who conducted and commanded the whole enterprise, manifested such a combination of tactics and of ability in his manœuvres, as place his name deservedly high in the annals of his country. If the reputation that he attained on this occasion, seems less brilliant than the fame acquired by Rodney in vanquishing De Grasse, it was not on that account less permanent or solid. Without engaging, he defied the combined fleets; offered battle, but did not seek it; effected every object of the expedition, by relieving Gibraltar, and then retreated; followed indeed by the enemy, but not attacked. They made, it is true, a show of fighting, but never ventured to come to close action. And with such contempt did Lord Howe treat the cannonade commenced by the van, composed of French ships under La Motte Piquet; that having ordered all his men on board the "Victory,"

to lie down flat on the deck, in order that their lives might not be needlessly exposed, he disdained to return a single shot against such cautious or timid opponents.

Pigot, who had succeeded to Rodney in the West Indies, through the favour of Fox, in defiance of public opinion, by no means emulated his predecessor's example of activity and enterprise. Though placed at the head of six and forty sail of the line, sustained by the reputation of a great victory, he neither effected nor attempted any object, during more than six months that he held the command. Such inactivity seemed to reproach the ministry who had sent him thither, and excited severe animadversions on Fox. In the East Indies, and there only, where Sir Edward Hughes was opposed to Suffrein, France still maintained the contest on the water. That active and intrepid officer last named, the most able of any employed by Louis the Sixteenth during the whole progress of the war, made repeated, though ineffectual efforts, for compelling the English squadron to abandon the coast of Coromandel.

[November.] While Lord Howe thus placed in security, the most brilliant foreign possession belonging to the British crown in Europe; negotiations of a pacific nature were carrying on at Paris, both with America, and with the other coalesced powers. The provisional articles concluded with the revolted colonies, which were first signed, did not indeed demand either any considerable length of time, or superior diplomatic talents, in order to conduct them to a prosperous termination; where almost every possible concession was made on the part of England, merely to obtain from America a cessation of hostilities. Not only their independence was recognised in the most explicit terms:—Territory, rivers, lakes, commerce, islands, ports and fortified places, Indian allies, loyalists;—all were given up to the Congress. In fixing the boundaries between Canada and the United States, ideal limits, ignorantly adopted on our part, were laid down amidst unknown tracts. Franklin, who, as one of the four American commissioners appointed to

manage the treaty, affixed his name to the instrument of provisional pacification; enjoyed, at the advanced period of fourscore years, the satisfaction of witnessing the complete emancipation of his countrymen from Great Britain, to effect which he had so eminently contributed by his talents and exertions. Few subjects, born and educated, like him, in the inferior classes of society, have in any age of the earth, without drawing the sword in person, obtained so gratifying a triumph over their legitimate sovereign, or have aided to produce a greater political revolution on the face of the globe.

[December.] A first minister who possessed so slender a portion of popularity, or of influence over the two houses of parliament, as Lord Shelburne could command; would, it was supposed, have employed the long interval subsequent to the prorogation, in strengthening by every exertion, his tenure of power. Unless he either regained the heads of the Rockingham party, or conciliated Lord North, which last measure seemed to be more natural; it was obvious that he might, at any moment, be crushed by the union of those leaders. On the opening of the session, it soon however became evident that no such ministerial approximation had taken place, and that the administration relied for support, upon its own proper strength, or ability. But, on the other hand, Lord North and Mr. Fox, though both acted in opposition to government, yet remained nevertheless still in complete and hostile separation. Scarcely did they refrain, on every occasion that presented itself, from personal reflections on each other. Neither the peace made with the American States, nor even the recognition of their independence by Great Britain, being however in themselves complete, till a treaty should be likewise concluded with France, public attention became wholly directed to the issue of the pending negotiations with that court. On their termination, whether it should prove hostile or pacific, all men foresaw that the two great parties, who now stood at bay, without joining each other, or uniting with Lord Shelburne; would necessarily take some decisive step, most beneficial, or most injurious in its results, to the administration.

Never perhaps at any period of our history, did two successive sessions of the same parliament, commence under circumstances more dissimilar than those of 1781 and of 1782. At the opening of the former, when the speech from the throne announced the disaster at York Town, consternation or depression might be legibly traced in almost every countenance. America was lost, Gibraltar invested, Jamaica menaced, our dominions in the east nearly subverted. But in December, 1782, the clouds had dispersed; not, however, from the change of ministers, but of measures. We no longer pursued the delusive phantom of subjecting the transatlantic colonies. Rodney, whom Lord Sandwich had sent out to the West Indies, had vanquished and dispersed the French navy. Eliott had destroyed the Spanish gun boats before Gibraltar. Lord Howe had thrown supplies into that fortress, and afterwards offered battle to the combined fleets. Nor were our affairs throughout the peninsula of Indostan, less changed. Hyder Ally was driven from before Madras. Peace had been concluded with the Mharattas; while Hughes, though not victorious, had frustrated all the efforts of Suffrein to obtain a superiority on the coast of Coromandel. The Rockingham administration had not in the slightest degree contributed towards these great national advantages. Fox had even recalled the victorious admiral, to whom we owed the twelfth of April. Keppel fitted out his fleets, with the stores provided by his predecessor in office; and to Lord Sandwich was, in fact, justly due the relief of Gibraltar. But Keppel had restored in a certain degree, that unanimity to which the British navy had been strangers during the progress of the whole American contest. Lord Howe, and Admiral Barrington, names deservedly cherished in our maritime annals, re-appeared on the quarter deck from which they had been so long removed. The fleets of the House of Bourbon, which, during three successive summers had approached, menaced, and insulted our coasts, no longer navigated the English channel. Peace began to dawn upon us, and seemed to be at no remote distance. The first minister, sustained by the sovereign at

St. James's, derived no less benefit from the talents of the chancellor of the exchequer within the walls of the House of Commons. While in probity, Pitt might be placed on an equality with Lord John Cavendish, not the slightest comparison could be made between their respective talents; and Lord Shelburne derived incalculable strength from his support. On this apparently firm foundation stood the ministry at the beginning of the session.

[5th and 6th December.]—The speech pronounced by his majesty from the throne on the occasion, may unquestionably be ranked among the most singular compositions ever put into the mouth of a British sovereign. In length, I believe, it had no parallel since the time of James the First, and certainly it would be vain to seek for any similar production, since the accession of the House of Hanover. Some passages seemed more suitable to the spirit and language of a moralist or of a sage, than of a monarch. In the midst of it was introduced an invocation, or rather a prayer, offered up by George the Third to the Supreme Being; imploring his divine interference to avert the calamities, which the American colonies, in consequence of their becoming independent states, might experience from the suppression of monarchical power. Burke held up this pious effusion of royal charity and philanthropy, to great ridicule. "The king," exclaimed he, "is made by his minister to fall upon his knees, and to deprecate the wrath of heaven from the misguided American people, that they may not suffer from the want of monarchy. A people who never were designed for monarchy! Who in their nature and character are adverse to monarchy, and who never had any other than the smell of monarchy, at the distance of three thousand miles! They are now to be protected by the prayers of their former sovereign, from the consequences of its loss. Such whimpering and absurd piety has neither dignity, meaning, nor common sense." It must be owned that these comments, however severe, were not destitute of truth. Other parts of the royal speech afforded him equal subject for mirth and satire. The king concluding by a de-

mand on parliament, for the exertion of *temper, wisdom, and disinterestedness*, subjoined as his last words, "My people *expect* these qualifications of you, and I *call* for them." "I believe," said Burke, "that since the days of Charles the First, who advanced into this house, and threw himself into the Speaker's chair, to find out the members who had given him offence; such a strain of vapouring and blustering, such an insult and indignity has not been offered to us. Are we to be slandered or tutored, or instructed in the principles of morals, by his majesty's cabinet ministers?"—"O wise ministers! *Dii tibi tonsorem donent!* To all except one, who has no occasion for such a practitioner." The allusion to Pitt's *youth*, could not escape notice. After paying nevertheless some compliments to the integrity of the young chancellor of the exchequer, which were all made however at the expense of the first lord of the treasury; Burke declared that the only proper description of the speech, which the minister had made the sovereign pronounce, was to be found in *Hudibras*, when he says,

"As if hypocrisy and nonsense
Had got th' adrowson of his conscience."

Nor was Fox less severe in his animadversions on this first production of the Earl of Shelburne in his ministerial capacity, though he was more argumentative, grave, and measured in his censures. On General Elliott, and on Lord Howe, he bestowed the highest encomiums:—encomiums, which were re-echoed from every part of the house! Having again recapitulated all the circumstances that attended and produced his own secession from the cabinet, he endeavoured to show that his resignation, by forcing the ministers to grant unconditional independence to America, had been productive of far greater advantages to his country, than he could have rendered by remaining a member of administration. With great ingenuity and severity he pointed out Lord Shelburne's inconsistent *declarations*, many times repeated in the upper house, that "he who should sign the independence of America, would consummate the ruin of his own

country, and must be a traitor;" now contrasted with his *act* in setting his hand to their complete emancipation. Such a contradictory language, coupled with his opposite system of conduct, could only, Fox observed, be properly characterized by two lines which he had somewhere read,

"You've done a noble turn in nature's spite;
For tho' you think you're wrong,—I'm sure
you're right."

Pitt, however, who, in a speech of equal ability, though much less diffuse, answered Fox on that evening; having defended his principal from the heavy imputations affixed to his political line of action, in acknowledging American independence, after his many protestations to the contrary; added, "if I may attempt a parody on the lines just quoted, I should say,

"The praise he gives us is in nature's spite.
He wishes we were wrong,—but, clearly sees
we're right."

The promptitude and elegance of this retort, made amidst the hurry and distractions of a long debate, in a crowded assembly, excited no little admiration. Nor did he touch with less delicacy and force of reasoning, on the circumstance of his own *youth*; "a calamity under which, he owned, he laboured; which he could not sufficiently lament, as it afforded such subject of animadversion to his opponents; but for which defect, he pledged himself to atone, by his care, industry and assiduity in the public service." If it had not been demonstrated already, how great an acquisition Lord Shelburne had made in the chancellor of the exchequer, the debates of the 5th and 6th of December, would have sufficiently proved the fact. Courtenay, when alluding to it, a few days afterwards, observed, "the noble earl at the head of the treasury, has shown his judgment in securing such an auxiliary. Every man reposes confidence in *him*. There is a species of magic in the name and lineage of a *Pitt*, which must produce its influence on the nation. The first minister, who is himself a great philosopher, has no doubt been informed by Dr. Priestley, that the best mode of

correcting and purifying corrupted air, is by the introduction of a young vegetable."

Lord North never appeared to me, during the whole time that I sate in the House of Commons, whether he was in or out of office, in a more dignified and elevated point of view, than on the first of those two evenings. I mean the 5th of December. His position was singular; standing aloof equally from ministers and from the Rockingham party; holding the balance between both; placed on a sort of elevation, by the events which had taken place since he resigned his employment; sustained by the glorious victories of Rodney and of Eliott; no longer menaced with impeachment; animated by steady loyalty to his sovereign, and not less propelled by attachment to his country. Such was his situation, and his language corresponded with it! Perhaps it would have been fortunate, if he had continued to occupy so advantageous, independent, and patriotic an eminence, without lending an ear to the seductions of ambition or of resentment, in forming a coalition with Fox, as he did only two months later. Unquestionably he would have appeared more an object of respect and veneration to posterity, by persisting in such a line of political action; superior to party, watchful over the Constitution, and attentive only to the great public interests of the state; than by accepting a secondary situation, as the colleague of Fox, under the Duke of Portland. A situation, which, when obtained, he was unable to retain more than a few months; and in accepting which, he must have made some sacrifices of feeling and of recollection, if not of principle! The speech which he pronounced on the first day of the session, was every way worthy of himself; and breathed the genuine spirit of a statesman, who though no longer directing the machine, yet superintended its movements with undiminished zeal, as well as ability. In contradiction to his usual style of speaking, he abstained from all levity, and refused to avail himself of those resources of wit and humour, which he had always at command. No sentiment of hostility or of animosity towards the new administration, characterized his expressions. He declared

that he felt not the most distant inclination to oppose the address, or to move any amendment, as the advantages accruing from unanimity at the present moment, would, in a national point of view, be incalculable. From the instant that he rose till he sate down, not a word escaped from his lips, which indicated the smallest approach towards the Rockingham party. On Fox he was even severe, when differing from him respecting various points of the greatest public importance. Nor did he spare Burke, for his animadversions on the *prayer* of the sovereign contained in the speech from the throne. "Surely, Mr. Speaker," said Lord North, "a heart animated by patriotic feelings, like that of his majesty, must experience the deepest sorrow at an act so calamitous to this country, as is the relinquishment of America. His sensations are truly those of a patriot king; and I am assured that he felt far less for himself, when he made so great a sacrifice, than he felt for his people."

On the conditions of peace which the enemy might offer, or which it became the ministers to accept, Lord North expressed himself in language of equal dignity, wisdom, and moderation. "To just and reasonable terms," said he, "I will most cheerfully assent; but should France or Spain display arrogance and injustice in their demands, every man in this assembly, and throughout the nation, will, I am persuaded, zealously concur in prosecuting the war with vigour." — "We unanimously demand an honorable treaty, or a vigorous war. We are ready to negotiate on fair and equitable principles; but if in their insolence or imaginary power, the enemy exact degrading conditions, we are determined to maintain the contest with our lives and fortunes." In terms of earnestness he recommended to the ministers, attention in marking out proper, well defined boundaries, between the territory of Great Britain and the American frontier; but above all, he trusted, that they would provide an asylum for the loyal and unhappy sufferers, who, throughout this long protracted struggle, had remained faithful to their native sovereign. Over Lord Shelburne he threw a shield, and justified his assertion, that "the sun of Britain was for ever set, when the

separation of the thirteen colonies should be signed." "That calamitous event," observed he, "cannot justly be charged to the present first minister, merely because he consummates the deed. It is we, not he, who must sustain the culpability. If the sun of England is indeed set, the House of Commons is the magician who has brought it down from the skies." No part of this admirable speech justly attracted more approbation, than the part in which he replied to Fox, who had attributed to Keppel's exertions, the advantages which we had gained on the element of the water. "It is not a little extraordinary," said Lord North, "that the same person, who, when he came into office, eight months ago, drew a picture of our naval condition, sufficient to make every man tremble in this house; should now stoutly affirm that our navy is equal to combating the united fleets of the House of Bourbon! But as ships do not spring up, like mushrooms, in a night; — by what magic could so great an addition be made to our navy within one summer, unless the former admiralty, by their preparations of ships and stores, had facilitated the means of victory? — I would say to the present naval Alexander, True, you have conquered; but you have conquered with Philip's troops." During the whole of the two debates which took place at the opening of the session, though General Conway and Mr. Secretary Townsend occasionally rose, yet the defence of the ministerial measures principally rested on the chancellor of the exchequer. No administration could commence under fairer auspices, which was destined to terminate so soon; not any attempt to divide the house being made either by Lord North or by Fox, who appeared to be reciprocally animated by the most hostile sentiments.

[11th December.] Among the weapons of attack which the Rockingham party directed with most success against the first minister, was the imputation of insincerity or duplicity. It was asserted that he interpreted the conditional or provisional articles concluded with the American states, in a different sense from the meaning annexed to them by other members of the cabinet; Lord Shel-

burne, it was pretended, regarding them as capable of being revoked or annulled, in case that the pending negotiations respecting peace between England and France, should be finally broken off; while Pitt, Conway, and Townsend, declared that they were, in every event, final and irrevocable. Unquestionably, some reasons for doubt as to the interpretation of the word *provisional*, might be reasonably entertained; and as the war with America might be revived, if the independence of the transatlantic state was not *unconditionally* and unequivocally acknowledged by Great Britain, Fox endeavoured to probe this ministerial wound. He did not indeed venture to divide the house upon it, nor attempt to stop the supplies, because he knew how insufficient was his parliamentary strength, for making either of those experiments with success. But he endeavoured to extort a clear reply from some of the ministers, relative to the point under discussion. They, on the other hand, refused or declined making any specific answer during the actual state of affairs, and demanded time. Burke, in his metaphorical and figurative language, compared them to the Amphibæna, which naturalists describe as having two heads, one at each extremity. "Such a serpent, I hope," added he, "exists only in chimera: but ministers resemble such an animal. They hiss an opposite language from the head, and from the tail, so that the nation is confounded between their contradictory stories." Even Lord North, though he approved of the silence observed by the treasury bench, under the circumstances of the moment; and though he further declared, that if any motion was made for compelling the administration to lay the provisional treaty before parliament, he would give it his negative; yet admitted that its interpretation was exceedingly problematical. As the Rockingham party was too feeble to come to extremities, unless sustained by Lord North, Fox contented himself therefore with laying on the first minister, the heaviest charges of double dealing in all his proceedings. Powis, who joined in these opinions, said that he held the three members of the cabinet who had seats, in the house, pledged as

hostages to the country, for the ratification of the provisional treaty according to *their* construction of it. Such reflections thrown on the Earl of Shelburne, however they might originate in the violence of party, and of political enmity; yet, as impeaching the candour and the rectitude of his public conduct, must have been equally painful to that nobleman himself, and to his associates in the government.

[12th December.] Though parliament sat for only a very short period during the month of December, scarcely exceeding a fortnight, previous to their adjournment till after Christmas; yet one very interesting debate, which arose in the House of Commons, produced a material operation on some articles of the peace then negotiating with the House of Bourbon. Rumours, which acquired considerable, if not implicit credit, were circulated throughout the metropolis, stating that Lord Shelburne had not only manifested a disposition, but had even consented, with the approbation of the cabinet, to cede Gibraltar to Spain, on certain conditions. He had indeed very early felt the pulse of parliament on the subject. Mr. Bankes, member for Corfe Castle, who seconded the address to the throne, on the first day of the session; and who seems to have been more deeply initiated in the secrets, or informed of the intentions of administration, than the mover of the address on that occasion; alluded in very clear and intelligible, though in general terms, to the possible, or rather probable cession of the fortress in question. He accompanied the intimation, with remarks on the great expense, and little comparative value or national advantages, connected with retaining its possession. Fox instantly animadverted with equal force and severity, on the idea thus suggested, which he held up to condemnation, as an act most pernicious to the state, if it should ever be carried into execution. In language of energy he depicted the respect, which our proud position on that isolated rock, excited among the European nations. "Cede to Spain," exclaimed he, "Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean becomes a pool; a mere pond, on which the Spaniards can navigate at their pleasure! Deprive

yourselves of this commanding station, and the states that border on that sea, will no longer look to England for the maintenance of its free navigation!" Nor did he let pass the occasion of wounding George the Third, through the sides of the King of Spain. Adverting to the opinion which had been given by Mr. Bankes, in the course of his speech, that "the cabinet of Madrid having ascertained the folly and impracticability of attempting to reduce Gibraltar, by their recent discomfiture, would never again employ the forces of the monarchy on so vain, as well as ruinous a siege;" Fox exposed the fallacy of such arguments. "There may be," observed he, "near the heart of every prince, a longing after some object, which a thousand disappointments or defeats cannot remove. Those who recollect the history of this country for near nine years past, will agree with me, that it is not easy to convince men of their follies, even when experience has proved them to be such. We have persisted through many ruinous campaigns, in a war for the subjection of the American colonies. What then should hinder us from believing, that Charles the Third may not persevere as pertinaciously in his longing for the reduction of Gibraltar, as a sovereign nearer home was taught to pursue the phantom of unconditional submission from America?" The very truth of this observation, which could not well be contested, ought to have prevented Fox from making it in so public a place.

Burke, supporting with all the powers of his eloquence, the positions advanced by his friend, trusted that ministers would not dare to sport with the feelings of the nation, respecting an object so justly cherished as Gibraltar. "That fortress," said he, "is invaluable, because impregnable. The sovereign of Spain has not an appendage of his crown, equalling it in importance. The capitals of Mexico and Peru are not at his disposal; and the island of Porto Rico, if offered, would by no means form an adequate compensation. Gibraltar is not merely a post of pride. It is a post of power, of connexion, and of commerce." In terms more measured, Lord North appreciated its value. "I will not go so far as to assert," observed he,

"that Gibraltar is inestimable, and in no possible case ought to be ceded to Spain. If peace cannot otherwise be obtained, such a sacrifice may become necessary; but its price should be large, and no ministers would be justified in resigning a possession so honorable, so useful, as well as so dear to this country, unless for an equivalent of the highest importance." The offers made by Charles the Third, were indeed of such a nature, as in the estimation of many able men, would have fully justified ministers in restoring to the Catholic king, that expensive fortress. I have been assured, that in his eagerness to re-annex Gibraltar to the Spanish monarchy, he tendered in exchange for it, the Canary Islands, together with Porto Rico in the West Indies: the former of which possessions, from their happy situation in the Atlantic, their climate, and productions, might be rendered most valuable acquisitions to Great Britain; while the latter island must be considered as scarcely inferior to Jamaica in extent, fertility, and political importance. Gibraltar, however dear to the national vanity, and whatever flattering recollections the late glorious defence might awaken, could not, it was imagined, be put in competition with the Canaries and Porto Rico. In a commercial point of view, no comparison could indeed be made between the two possessions: but as an object of national consideration, respect, and power, we shall probably admit that Gibraltar would have been ill exchanged for any Atlantic, or West India islands. I am of that sentiment in 1818, though I am ready to confess that I thought otherwise in 1782.

Sir George Howard, who was himself a general officer, having nevertheless unexpectedly provoked, and brought forward in the House of Commons, a discussion relative to that fortress, and the possibility that its cession or alienation to Spain, might be in contemplation; it soon appeared, that men of all parties were imbued with partialities so warm and violent in its favour, and such indignation was manifested at the bare idea of ceding it, even for any equivalent however valuable, that the intention was relinquished. Nothing could assuredly have been further from Sir George's in-

tention, who was an excellent courtier, than to have agitated any subject, which in its results might embarrass the councils of the crown. But General Conway having moved the thanks of the house to General Eliott, for his glorious defence of Gibraltar, Howard proposed adding, "the most valuable and important fortress of all our foreign territories." These few words operated like the apple of discord, and afforded to opposition an ample field for declamation. Lord North was not present on that evening, but Fox instantly availed himself of the occasion. Sir George finding, that while he had only intended to place General Eliott's public merits in the fairest point of view, by demonstrating the importance of his services, the motion had produced a great political question, would willingly have withdrawn his amendment. Fox however expressed the utmost disinclination to consent. "I do not, myself," said he, "credit the reports of an intended cession of Gibraltar, because I am convinced that there is not in the cabinet a single man who dares to give it up. The amendment, if it should be carried, will convince the public at large, how false are these rumours: but it will likewise prove to the Spanish government, that the nation is not disposed to permit of such a cession." Burke maintained the same arguments; and Mr. Daniel Parker Coke declared, that he would rather cut off his right hand, than ever consent to restore Gibraltar. Sir George Howard's amendment was nevertheless finally withdrawn, by consent of the house; but the substance of the debate having been taken down in short hand, by a person stationed in the gallery, and immediately communicated to Lord Shelburne; he despatched a messenger with it, the next morning, to our minister at Paris, Mr. Fitzherbert, now Lord St. Helens: enjoining him to lay it before the Count de Vergennes, and the Count d'Aranda. I know from good authority, that the latter nobleman, who was then the Spanish ambassador at the court of Versailles, had received the most positive instructions not to sign any peace with Great Britain, however favourable the terms might be in other respects, unless the cession of Gibraltar, constituted one of the articles of the

treaty. Finding nevertheless, after the communication above mentioned, that no equivalent would be accepted for its restitution; and that the British cabinet did not dare to do it in violation of public opinion; d'Aranda, in disobedience to these orders, finally affixed his name to the act, taking on himself the risk and the responsibility.

[13th — 23d December.] Previous to the adjournment of the House of Commons before Christmas, Fox made another ineffectual attempt to compel the production of the provisional treaty with America. The debate which took place on this occasion, being in fact the last that arose of an important nature, previous to the peace with our European enemies; and consequently, previous to the union of Lord North with the Rockingham party; was distinguished by some very interesting circumstances. Fox grounded his motion for laying the treaty in question, before the house on the notorious disagreement between the first lord of the treasury, and his colleagues in the cabinet, on its acceptance; Lord Shelburne declaring it to be revocable, if peace should not be finally made with France, while others of the ministers maintained it to be, in every event, final. Such a discordant exhibition of sentiment on so important a point, seemed to call for some explanation or disclosure on the part of administration. Fox, however, well aware how weak was his numerical strength within those walls, unless sustained by Lord North; after endeavouring to justify his demand of the treaty, on principles of public expediency; added, "I expect support in my motion, though I do not court it. I do not indeed know whether I may calculate on the aid of the noble lord in the blue ribband, seated below me; as by a strange mode of reasoning, he brings himself to vote with ministers, though he totally disagrees with them in opinion." The treasury bench preserving a profound silence, Mr. Thomas Pitt moved the *order of the day*; at the same time advising and adjuring his ministerial friends, not to violate their oath as privy counsellors, since nothing except misconstruction and misrepresentation could arise from their explanations. At this period of the discussion Lord

North presented himself to the Speaker's notice, and delivered one of the most entertaining speeches ever heard in that assembly. Never, I believe, was more wit crowded into so narrow a compass! Every sentence conveyed the most delicate irony, or the most contumelious, yet amusing, ridicule. He began by lamenting that Mr. Thomas Pitt's wholesome and sage advice to his friends, on the subject of observing discretion and secrecy, should have come too late to be of any use, they having already been guilty of divulging their opinions. Having expressed his concern that it was impossible to agree with a divided cabinet, *collectively*; he said he would nevertheless agree with them *partially*, and vote for the order of the day: as he should at least be sure of coinciding with those members of administration who sat opposite to him. "For," added he, "though I perfectly agree with the right honorable gentleman (Fox), in all his statements and principles, yet I cannot think the present moment a seasonable one for producing the provisional articles." With inconceivable humour he contrasted, and exposed the different *versions* of the treaty; first, as presented in the king's speech from the throne, at the opening of the session; next in Lord Shelburne's language; and lastly, in the declarations of the other ministers. "I prefer, however," said he, "the edition of this matter, as we have it on *royal paper*, before all the subsequent editions, *cum notis variorum*, which have been since published." On the subject of that oath, to the strict observance of which the members of the cabinet were entreated to adhere, he made some observations so ludicrous, as put all gravity to flight. "If," observed he, "this mysterious treaty depended on no contingency whatever, it would resemble, not a privy counsellor's oath, of which we have heard so much to-day: but a much less serious oath, of which we have all heard, and which some of us may probably have taken. I mean, the oath administered at Highgate, by which a man swears that he never will drink small beer, when he can get strong, unless he likes the former best; nor ever kiss the maid, when he might kiss the mistress, unless he chuse the maid in preference."

Continuing, or rather, resuming his speech, as soon as the house had recovered from the violent effect of this simile on their muscles, he directed his artillery of jests against the cabinet, of which three members were present. "It has been asserted," observed Lord North, "that the contradictory opinions of ministers might be reduced to some certainty, by subjecting them to the wisdom of this assembly. I cannot think so: — for surely the present cabinet is the place where we might expect, of all others, unanimous agreement on matters of state policy. It is composed of eleven men, of distinguished talents, immense wisdom, consummate experience, and determined firmness. This assemblage of genius has besides as many more agents or commissioners now employed at Paris, on the important work of peace. If such men are not able to fix the determinate import and meaning of the treaty before us; how can we expect it to be done within our walls? I have heard this house called the temple of eloquence, of reason, of freedom, and of fame; but I never yet knew it to be called the temple of concord." As, however, though Lord North had held up the administration to ridicule, and had so pointedly *spoken against* them, he nevertheless declared his intention to *vote for* them; I believe, Fox would not have divided the house, if General Conway had not provoked him to it, by asserting on his legs, "that the member who had originated the debate would not dare to take the sense of the house, well knowing by how small a minority he would be attended into the lobby." Irritated at such an insinuation, of which he expressed his indignant sense, Fox persisted; and a division taking place on Mr. Thomas Pitt's motion for the *order of the day*, the Rockingham party could only muster forty-six votes. Government, supported by Lord North and his adherents, exhibited a triumphant majority of two hundred and nineteen, thus carrying the question by one hundred and seventy-three. It is difficult to determine with any certainty, the respective numbers that voted with administration, and with Lord North, on that evening. I should however estimate the followers of the

latter, at seventy to eighty. That he could incline the balance to which ever side he pleased, was evident. He appeared indeed, throughout the whole debate, not only pre-eminent in talents of every description; but as the arbiter of the scene. Like Henry the Eighth, he might have assumed for his device, "*Cui adhæreo, præest.*" Nor could Fox avoid perceiving that his own way into the cabinet, unless he chose to serve under Lord Shelburne, must lie through Lord North's assistance, and could be effected by no other mode. That nobleman, since the day on which he resigned his power, had not occupied a more dignified place in the public eye, and in parliamentary estimation. These facts, and the reflections to which they necessarily gave rise, produced within two months, the memorable *coalition*. A few days subsequent to the above debate, an adjournment of the two houses of parliament took place till the 23d of January.

[1783, January.] Throughout a considerable part of the month of January, the greatest fluctuation of public opinion prevailed relative to the final success of the treaties agitating at Paris; and as late as the 18th, the queen's birth-day, the prevalent ideas in the drawing-room were generally adverse to the probability of a favourable issue; but, five days afterwards, intelligence arrived in London, that peace had been signed at Versailles. Lord Keppel, either from repentance of his conduct in having quitted Fox after the Marquis of Rockingham's decease; or suspicious of the approaching dissolution of the actual ministry; or (as he asserted afterwards on the debate which took place in the House of Peers), disapproving the articles of the treaty recently concluded; immediately resigned his employment of first lord of the admiralty. He was succeeded by Lord Howe, and early in the month of February, the Marquis of Carmarthen was named ambassador to the court of France. Though the House of Commons met on the 21st of January, pursuant to its adjournment, yet no business of moment was brought forward, either by ministers, or by their opponents, during the considerable interval of near a month which elapsed, previous to the

day fixed for discussing the articles of the peace in both houses of parliament. They had intermediately been exchanged and ratified by the two governments. A more than ordinary interest was excited on the subject, throughout the nation; the stability or dismission of the administration, evidently depending on the parliamentary approval or disapprobation of the treaty. In the House of Lords, there seemed to be, indeed, little danger of incurring a vote of censure. But it was otherwise in the lower house, where the minister, in addition to his own slender personal strength, and the individuals holding offices under the crown, could only expect support, either from persons inclined to maintain indifferently every government; or from those independent members, who, disregarding all motives of party, might be induced to approve the treaties, on the ground of their abstract merits, and their just claim to national gratitude.

Facts such as these, which were palpable to all, could not possibly escape the attention of him who was most deeply interested in their result. And it has always appeared to persons uninformed, one of the most inexplicable events of our time, that Lord Shelburne, who must have perceived the great improbability of his being able to maintain himself in power, after the conclusion of peace, without the aid of one or the other of the two great parties in opposition; should nevertheless have allowed parliament to meet for the express purpose of discussing the merits of the peace, without conciliating previously the leaders of either side. Was he then indifferent to the preservation of that office, which he had acquired with so much address, and not unaccompanied with a degree of obloquy? No person can believe or suppose it. Neither his adherents nor his enemies, ever maintained such an opinion. How therefore are we to interpret a conduct so contrary to all the dictates of ambition, policy, and self-interest? In order to explain it, I shall state such circumstances as have been related to me by individuals possessing information, which will at least throw considerable light upon the subject.

It seemed certainly most natural, that of the two parties excluded from power,

Lord Shelburne should have addressed himself to that body of men, which still considered Lord North as its head. — To many of the individuals composing it, I know that he did in fact make advances, either personally or by his friends. Mr. Orde, the secretary, in whose department lay the *management* of the House of Commons, was not idle during the autumn of 1782. The American war being terminated, the principal object of disunion between the late, and the present, first minister, was at an end. Lord Shelburne was moreover known to have pertinaciously resisted the concession of independence to America. His reluctance and pretended duplicity, or rather his ambiguity, relative to granting *unconditional* independence to the thirteen colonies, formed one of the most prominent points of accusation against him, on the part of Fox and the Rockingham party. It could not be doubted that the king, who, availing himself of favourable circumstances, had elevated the first lord of the treasury, to the place that he held: and who deprecated no event so much, as being a second time compelled to take Fox into his councils; would secretly approve, and would sincerely promote any measure tending to exclude him from administration. Of all political unions that could be effected with a view to strengthen the ministry, and alliance between Lord North and Lord Shelburne, it was therefore assumed, must be most agreeable to the sovereign. Nor, as I have been assured, did there exist any insurmountable personal antipathies or impediments between those two noble persons, which could have prevented such an event taking place. But though *they* might have been willing to coalesce, there were other individuals in the government not possessed of so tractable or so conciliating a disposition. Mr. Pitt, and the Duke of Richmond, both inflexibly refused to sit in cabinet with Lord North; and they remained firm upon the point.

Partial as I am to the memory and character of that amiable nobleman, I am far from blaming their determination. They considered Lord North as the minister, who during many years had carried on and supported by his parlia-

mentary ability, a contest become hopeless, which had precipitated Great Britain into disgrace, as well as debt. His subserviency to the royal will or wishes, even if proved, would only in their eyes, have aggravated his culpability. They regarded the loss of our American colonies as the necessary consequence of his councils, or of his administration. He was besides accused by them, of having made parliament the corrupt instrument of his policy, and of having purchased the support which he received in both houses. Political principle therefore dictated and produced their refusal to associate him to their ministry. Such an obstacle was neither to be surmounted, nor to be removed. The Duke of Richmond might, indeed, have been dismissed, without apprehension of its producing very injurious results of any kind; but Mr. Pitt was essential to the ministerial existence and duration. His high character and his *name*, joined to his eminent talents, formed Lord Shelburne's best security for carrying any measure through the House of Commons. Neither Townsend nor Conway possessed the eloquence, ability, or hereditary weight, that met in the chancellor of the exchequer. If, therefore, in order to gain Lord North, the first lord of the treasury had thrown Pitt into opposition, no exertions could have long resisted his and Fox's united attacks, fighting side by side. And the house itself would probably, nay infallibly, have reprobated such a junction, when attained by the expulsion of Pitt from power. These causes prevented any attempt being made to gain Lord North's support, by admitting him and his principal friends to places in the cabinet; and his friendship, it was obvious, could not be obtained on inferior terms.

[21st January — 15th February.]

The strongest indications were meanwhile given on the part of Fox's adherents, as well as by some of the friends of Lord North, that they intended to attack and to arraign the treaties of peace just concluded. No sooner had the preliminaries signed between England and the two branches of the House of Bourbon, together with the provisional articles made with America, been brought down to the House of Com-

mons, and read by the clerk; than Mr. Eden instantly rose, to express the feelings of concern, or rather, of indignation and distress, with which the fifth article of the American treaty inspired him. It regarded the royalists, who, as appeared from the nature of the provisions, were abandoned by Great Britain, and left exposed to the severest treatment from the provincial assemblies. This circumstance took place on the 27th of January. Four days later, Fox, in answer to some remarks which fell from General Conway, on the subject of the recent pacification; observed, that though he did not mean to anticipate the consideration of the treaties, for which discussion a proper time would be appointed, yet that they did not consider it to be as good a peace as might have been made by ministers. Eden entered his protest on the same evening, against the cession of a vast portion of Canada, comprehending no less than eighteen thousand square miles; declaring it to be his opinion, that in dissevering so large a territory from the empire, administration had violated a positive act of parliament. On the 10th of February, Fox, while alluding to the preliminaries, said, that they did not bear on their face, their justification. Lord Nugent, though generally disposed to support government, yet spoke in language of the utmost violence on the subject of the loyalists. "If his majesty's ministers," exclaimed he, "have omitted any personal exertion in favour of those unfortunate men, no punishment can be adequate to their crime. Their blood alone can wipe away the stain inflicted on the honour of their country. Governor Johnstone repeated these denunciations, in scarcely milder terms: while Sheridan, who already seemed to fix on Pitt, as an object of his personal reprehension and attack whenever a favourable occasion arose, exhorted the chancellor of the exchequer not to speak in so high a tone from the treasury bench. "If," added Sheridan, "he and his colleagues had held as lofty a style to the enemies of Great Britain, during the late discussions relative to peace, as they do here, they would not be compelled to stand so much on the defensive, as they probably

must do, when the examination of the preliminaries comes before us." Every circumstance announced a determination to push matters to extremity, and if possible, to drive the ministers from their posts, for having sacrificed the honour, as well as the interests of Great Britain, in the recent treaties.

Lord Shelburne, conscious of the approaching danger, and desirous of averting a parliamentary conflict so doubtful in its issue, caused overtures of a conciliatory nature to be made to Fox; offering to replace him in his late office, and to provide for his friends or connections who had followed him out of power after Lord Rockingham's decease. The king was induced, though reluctantly, to allow and to approve of the proposals, on the ground of state necessity; it being esteemed a less serious evil, to admit Fox into the cabinet by negotiation, than to incur the risk of his entering it by storm. In the first case, he would remain still in a minority, while the treasury would be completely independent of him; whereas in the second event, he would dictate the law. But Fox, though he professed himself willing to make a part of an administration formed upon a broad basis, and therefore disposed to listen to the proposition, exacted one indispensable preliminary; namely, Lord Shelburne's dismission, or resignation. Unless the treasury were placed in the hands of the Duke of Portland as the new recognised head of the Rockingham party; and unless Lord Shelburne were wholly excluded from a place in the cabinet, he peremptorily refused to accede to any terms of accommodation. With all the other principal individuals composing the ministry, he declared his readiness to act; but personally to Lord Shelburne, his repugnance continued insurmountable, and could not be removed by any efforts.

In embracing this determination, it seems impossible to doubt that he was more impelled by passion;—in using which term, I mean rivalry, party feelings, and personal aversion to the first lord of the treasury; than by moral or political principle. Even his secession from the cabinet, in July, 1782, though it originated in a difference of opinion

on a great state question of the deepest importance, namely, the grant of unconditional independence to America; yet was consummated from resentment and precipitation. Probably he regretted it when too late;—for, it was proved by facts, that, whatever Lord Shelburne might have meditated or even declared, relative to not conceding independence to the transatlantic colonies, he was over-ruled, and compelled by the cabinet to carry into execution that humiliating measure. Nay more, we have the authority of General Conway, when addressing the House of Commons, on the subject, for asserting, that the first minister not only overcame and subdued his own reluctance in declaring the American states independent; but by his arguments or persuasions prevailed on the king his master, to surmount his strongly rooted antipathy to the same act of renunciation. Fox, indeed, always asserted and maintained, that his resignation of office had produced more benefit to the country, and had operated more powerfully to force Lord Shelburne's acquiescence on the point in question, than he could have done by remaining a member of the cabinet. But, it is evident that he did not lie under any necessity of throwing up his employment, or of sacrificing his principles. It never arrived at that alternative, for which he ought to have waited, before he came to extremities. If he had temperately and steadily opposed the first minister: appealing to his colleagues, Lord Keppel, Conway, and the Duke of Richmond, for support; sustained as he was, by Lord John Cavendish; the Earl of Shelburne must have given way or he would have been left in a minority. No doubt, Fox's secession and appeal to the House of Commons, or rather to the nation, forced the first minister, as well as his colleagues, to concede unequivocally independence to America. But, if Fox had been more master of himself, and less under the dominion of anger, or of the desire to dictate in the cabinet, he might have effected his object by a menace of resignation, and yet have retained the seal. In forming an alliance with Lord North, as he soon afterwards did, he made a far greater surrender of principle, and at the same time shocked pub-

lie opinion much more, than he could possibly have done by acting with Lord Shelburne, whatever measures had been adopted by administration.

Such, as I have always understood, were the leading principles or circumstances, on which was subsequently reared that celebrated junction between Lord North and Fox, which, from its extraordinary nature, and more extraordinary effects, has obtained in English history, by way of distinction from all other political unions or alliances ever contracted in our time, the name of "*the coalition*." The proscription of Lord North by Pitt, and of Lord Shelburne by Fox, of necessity drove the two excluded ministers into each other's arms; at once obliterated all past causes of offence between them; and impelled them, banishing every retrospect, as well as in some measure setting general opinion at defiance, only to look forward to the joint possession of power. As the 17th of February stood fixed for the consideration of the articles of peace, in both houses of parliament; and as Lord North disapproved of many of those articles, no less strongly than Fox; it became obvious that they must, in all cases, divide together on that night, against the administration. And if they should find themselves in a majority, as was highly probable, it seemed to follow that the ministers must retire from office. But in order to avail themselves of their triumph, and to form a new administration, some mutual understanding, if not some principles of permanent accommodation, became absolutely necessary to both individuals. Otherwise, however victorious they might prove in parliament, they would probably derive no benefit from their superiority; and Lord Shelburne, though vanquished in the House of Commons, might still contrive to retain his seat in the cabinet, as first minister.

These considerations, in themselves most forcible, acquiring hourly strength as the day approached for the discussion of the peace, produced some symptoms of mutual tendency towards reconciliation. Never, perhaps, did two men exist, more inclined by nature to oblivion of injuries, or to sentiments of forgiveness, than Lord North and Fox! The latter, whatever might be his defects of

character, possessed in an eminent degree, placability and magnanimity of mind. "*Amicitia sempiternæ, inimicitia placabiles*," was a maxim always in his mouth. The former, too indolent to retain the burthen of enmity, and conscious that Fox's hostility towards him, had always been more political than personal; gladly deposited his resentments, his recollections, and his injuries, at the feet of his interest and ambition. Both equally concurred in the necessity of agreeing on some plan of concerted action, before they took their places, side by side, on the opposition bench. Hitherto, though Lord North usually or always sate there, Fox continued to speak from the third bench, as did Burke. But however deeply they might be impressed with these feelings, they nevertheless abstained from any direct interview, leaving all matters to the intervention of mutual friends. The honorable George Augustus North, eldest son of Lord North, then member for Harwich, and afterwards himself Earl of Guildford, acted as the negotiator for his father, on this occasion: while the honorable Colonel Fitzpatrick, Fox's intimate friend and companion, conducted the treaty on the other part. Mr. North by no means wanted talents; but in address, capacity, and accomplishments, the latter possessed an infinite superiority. Each, actuated by a warm desire to conduct the business to a successful issue, exerted his utmost efforts for the purpose. Two or three days elapsed in conferences and discussions: nor was it till a very late hour of the night of the 16th of February, that, after many visits to and fro, between St. James's street and Grosvenor square, where Lord North then resided, they finally settled the outlines of a convention; by which, on the part of the two principals it was stipulated, that if they effected a change of administration, the treasury should be given to the Duke of Portland; that Lord North should likewise take a cabinet office; that a fair partition of the spoils, in other words, of the great posts and emoluments of the state, should be made between the two parties, who agreed henceforward to coalesce. And, lastly, that in the debate of the approaching evening, they should speak, act, and divide in concert.

[17th February.] Such were the general preliminaries of the "coalition." Many difficulties on both sides, which impeded the progress of the negotiation, protracted its termination; nor did either Lord North or Fox retire to rest, till four or five o'clock in the morning, when the business was at length concluded. Fox, accustomed to pass the greater part of the night at Brookes's, appeared in the House of Commons with his usual freshness, on the ensuing evening; and manifested during the debate that ensued, neither inattention, lassitude, nor fatigue. But Lord North, whose natural somnolency was increased, by having sat up for so many hours of the preceding night, under circumstances of considerable agitation, as well as by the prodigious heat arising from a crowded house; — after taking his seat near his new ally, on the opposition bench, found himself so overcome by sleep, that its effect became irresistible. Unwilling, probably, to exhibit such a spectacle, at such a moment, which would have excited matter of animadversion, or of ridicule, to both parties; he at length quitted his seat, and came up into the gallery. I had placed myself there; immediately over the treasury bench, every part of the house below being filled. Lord North having seated himself by me, made various efforts to keep himself awake; but to accomplish it, exceeded his power. As the discussion had already taken a very personal turn; severe sarcasms, as well as reproaches, being levelled from the treasury bench, against the unnatural coalition just formed; particularly by Mr. Dundas, who stigmatized it with the strongest epithets of contumelious reprobation; he requested me to awaken him, as often as any such expressions should be used by ministers. I did so, many times; but when he had listened for a few minutes, he as often involuntarily relapsed into repose. At the end of about an hour and a half, during the greater portion of which time he seemed scarcely sensible to any circumstance that passed, he began to rouse himself. By degrees he recovered his perception; and having heard from my mouth, some of the most interesting, or acrimonious passages that had taken place while he was asleep, he went down again into the

body of the house, placed himself by Fox on the floor, and made one of the most able, brilliant, as well as entertaining speeches, that I ever heard him pronounce within those walls. No man who listened to it, could have imagined that he had lost a single sentence of the preceding debate, or that his faculties had been clouded by fatigue and want of rest.

Lord John Cavendish, whom Fox always selected for special and important occasions; as his high character for integrity and uprightness, spread a sort of veil over the irregularities of his party; moved an amendment on that night, to the address proposed by the friends of administration. Lord John's amendment was however couched in terms so guarded, with a view to secure as many votes as possible, that it might rather be termed a hesitation in approving, than any direct censure on the peace. Even Lord North, who afterwards proposed a second amendment, in which he recommended the American loyalists to his majesty's consideration; implied, more than he asserted, that they had been forgotten or abandoned by the framers of the articles of pacification concluded with the thirteen colonies. The *coalition*, avowed by Fox, was not only defended with the boldness and decision that marked his character; but he retorted on the lord advocate, all the acrimonious expressions which fell from the latter, upon the sudden union of two such inveterate opponents. Mr. Townsend, as secretary of state, excelled himself in his defence of the peace, and may really be said to have in some measure earned on that night, the peerage which he soon afterwards obtained. I never saw him display so much animation, nor heard him manifest such ability. Nor was Pitt wanting to himself, or to his party. But all their efforts proved unavailing to sustain an administration, which having been originally established on too shallow foundations, had received no subsequent reinforcement. After a debate, protracted till near eight o'clock in the morning, they were left in a minority of *sixteen*. Only nine votes therefore, taken from the coalition, and transferred to ministers, would have given them a majority; and above four hundred and thirty members voted on the occasion.

Many curious and interesting circumstances, some among them of a personal nature, took place in the course of that long discussion, which were calculated to make a deep impression on the memory. Powis, first of any individual who rose to speak, assumed the existence of a political union between Lord North and Fox; reasoned upon it as a fact consummated, and reprobated it in terms of the severest irony, or condemnation. "The house now beholds," said he, "for the first time, the lofty defenders of royal prerogative, allied with the zealous worshippers of the majesty of the people. The most determined supporter of the influence of the crown, joins hands with the purifier of the Constitution, the reformer of the household." With great ability, and still greater candour, Powis pointed out the defects and concessions of the treaties just concluded; expressed his regret that such features of the work should excite his disapprobation; but added, "yet, considering the whole collectively, and the national position at the present moment, I am ready to give my full assent to the address moved, and to declare my perfect satisfaction." If similar sentiments, superior to the spirit of party, had animated the assembly at large, Lord Shelburne would have kept his office. So guardedly couched, indeed, was the amendment which Lord North moved, that Mr. Townsend offered to agree with it, if the noble lord would vote for the address: but, the secretary of state's proposal met with an instant rejection. Burke answered Powis's animadversions on the junction between Lord North and Fox, the principles of which union he justified; though as to the fact, he neither denied, nor admitted it. "Those persons, however," observed he, "who hold that opinion, and censure so violently the alliance; have only to direct their eyes to the treasury bench, where they will behold a *learned lord* sitting between the chancellor of the exchequer and the secretary of state." Dundas instantly rose, and in a speech of considerable length, as well as of great ability, full of most galling personalities to Fox, contrasted his former denunciations of Lord North while first minister, with his present line of political action. He

desired Fox to recollect his own assertions, that "almost any peace ought to be made, in order to extricate the country from its embarrassments, and to dissolve the combination of powers leagued against us." Nor did Dundas omit to remind him of his pretended declaration, that "he had a peace in his pocket;" as well as his assertions of the ruined state of the navy, which incapacitated us for continuing the contest with our European enemies. On the newly consummated union between the two chiefs of opposition, and on the sickly offspring of their political embrace, namely, the motions submitted to the house, he indulged in the keenest sarcasms.

Lord North's speech on that night, was worthy a statesman, who had been the minister of a great empire. In a masterly manner, without any mixture of passion, disdaining his usual appeals to ridicule, he reviewed consecutively all the features of the peace, and demonstrated the vices or errors interwoven throughout almost every article of the three treaties. While he was engaged in discussing one of the most serious points of the question under examination; a dog which had taken shelter, and concealed himself under the table of the House of Commons, made his escape, and ran directly across the floor, setting up at the same time a violent howl. It occasioned a burst of laughter, and might have disconcerted an ordinary man. But he who knew how to convert the most awkward occurrences, to purposes of advantage; having waited till the roar which it produced, had subsided; and preserving all his gravity, addressed the chair. "Sir," said he to the Speaker, "I have been interrupted by a new member; but as he has concluded his argument, I will now resume mine." Governor Johnstone, with his characteristic violence of tone and language, declaimed against various stipulations or cessions contained in the American treaty; which, he asserted, could only have been made by gross ignorance, geographical and political. Among others, having mentioned the restitution of the two Floridas to Spain, he accused ministers of an utter unacquaintance with the value, the productions, or the naval and commercial importance of those provinces.

"I was, myself," added he, "governor of West Florida, and I know its consequence. As to East Florida, it can boast of one of the finest harbours on the globe, infinitely superior to the Havannah; more capacious, more safe, and more healthy." The secretary of state, who sat opposite to him, expressing by his looks and gestures, the astonishment which these encomiums excited, "I perceive clearly," exclaimed Johnstone, "that the right honorable secretary is ignorant of the existence of this bay. I will tell him where it is situate, and how it is named. The harbour to which I allude, is that of Spirito Santo, or Tampa, situate on the bay of Mexico. Its possession would be invaluable to Great Britain." Townsend did not attempt to deny that he was uninformed upon the subject; nor probably was there another individual within the walls of the house, except Johnstone, who possessed any accurate knowledge of the bay in question. Similar acts of ministerial ignorance are to be found in almost every treaty between nations.

Fox neither distinctly avowed, nor still less did he deny his junction with Lord North. "That such an alliance has actually taken place between us," said he, in reply to Dundas's acrimonious remarks, "I can by no means aver: but, if it should be formed, I see not any ground for arraigning our conduct, or stigmatizing it as an unnatural union. That I shall concur on this night, with the noble lord in the blue ribband, is very certain. The American war, and that only, constituted the subject of enmity between us. It is now terminated, and with it has ceased our hostility." Then, having contrasted the honorable, open, and manly character of his new ally, with the evasions, subterfuges, and insincerity, which he imputed to the actual first minister; he endeavoured to justify himself from some of the imputations laid to his charge by the lord advocate. Nor will I deny that in my judgment he exculpated himself fully on almost every point. "I never said," replied he, "that I had a peace in my pocket: words falsely attributed to me. But I averred that there were persons empowered by America to treat of peace

who had applied to the Duke of Richmond and Lord Keppel, by whom I was authorized to mention it in this house. The learned lord challenges me to produce the peace that I had projected to make, when I was secretary of state. Will any of the king's ministers give me the same defiance? I dare them to do it. They know what it is:—for they have it in the foreign office. If, on inspection, it disproves my assertion, let them take advantage of it: and let them hold me up to public condemnation, as a man capable of advising my sovereign, to make, if it be possible, a worse and more ruinous peace than the treaties now on the table." To Dundas himself personally, Fox addressed some of his severest animadversions. "The learned lord," said he, "informs us that he is always ready to support any government, whose principles he approves. I believe that he is sincere in his assertion; and in order that he may always be able to support administration, he will take care invariably to approve of their principles, whatever they may be, or whoever may become ministers."

But the circumstance, which, above all, rendered that evening memorable, as well as entertaining, was the alteration which arose between Sheridan and Pitt. It may be said to have originated with the former, who adverting to an antecedent debate, during the course of which, the chancellor of the exchequer had objected to the production of a depending treaty, on the ground that such an act had no precedent on the journals of parliament; Sheridan treated his assertion with great asperity, not unaccompanied with ridicule. "If," said he, "the right honorable gentleman's youth and very early political exaltation, had allowed him time to look for precedents, or to attain a knowledge of the journals, his discretion might have imposed some restraint on his precipitation. He would not then have manifested so much indignation at the questions put to ministers, and which it became their duty to satisfy. These facts convince me that he is more of a practical, than an experienced politician." Indignant at the style and language of Sheridan's reprehension, and perhaps hoping to crush at once an adversary so galling, Pitt no sooner rose to

address the house, than he directed all the force of his eloquence towards that quarter. "There is no man, sir," said he, when commencing his speech, "who admires more than I do, the abilities of that honorable member," fixing his eye on Sheridan; "the elegant sallies of his mind, the pleasing effusions of his fancy, his *dramatic* turns, and his epigrammatic allusions. If they were only reserved for the proper *stage*, they would no doubt ensure, what his distinguished talents always have acquired, the *plaudits* of his *audience*; and it would be his recompense, *sui plausu gaudere theatri*. But this place is not the proper *scene* for exhibiting such elegancies, and I must therefore call the attention of the house to more serious considerations of public importance."

If Pitt had pronounced this animadversion, so pointed, classic, and personal, at the close, not at the commencement of his discourse, and had instantly sat down; probably even Sheridan would have found himself unequal to replying on the instant, and the chancellor of the exchequer might have obtained at least a temporary triumph. But the length of time that he remained on his legs, gave his opponent leisure for meditating a proper answer. Ordinary individuals would have sunk under the reproof, or would have displayed more resentment, than wit or composure. The reference to his theatrical occupations, was no doubt illiberal, as well as calculated to oppress any, except a man constituted like Sheridan. He, on the contrary, found in the attack, matter of advantage over his adversary and of exaltation to himself. Rising as soon as Pitt had finished, and having prefaced with a few words, under pretence of explanation, "With regard," said he, "to the particular species of personality which has just been introduced, I need not comment on it. The house will have appreciated its taste, its point, its propriety. But let me assure the person who has had recourse to it, that whenever he may think proper to repeat such allusions, I will meet them with perfect good humour. Nay more, — encouraged by the encomiums bestowed on my talents, should I ever again engage in the occupations to which he al-

ludes, I may, by an act of presumption, attempt to improve on one of Ben Jonson's best characters, the *Angry Boy* in the *Alchymist*." The admiration excited by a repartee so keen and so prompt, cannot easily be conceived. Pitt never returned a second time to the charge, mounted on the same horse: but a degree of mutual alienation seemed always to subsist between him and Sheridan, founded on the incompatibility of their characters, tempers, and humours. No two men were indeed ever cast in more dissimilar moulds. On the respective superiority of their intellectual endowments, I shall not venture to decide, or to pronounce. Both were the prodigies of their day.

Lee, the late solicitor general, arising at a very advanced hour of the morning, as he was apt to do, exhausted his vehemence, or rather, his rage, on the first minister; whose character, as well as his administration, and in particular, the peace just concluded, which he denominated "a dismemberment of the empire, disgraceful, wicked, and treacherous," he loaded with epithets of condemnation. On Lord North, as a statesman of incorruptible integrity, manly, and superior to artifice or evasion of every kind, he was as profuse in his panegyrics, as he was indecorous and violent towards the Earl of Shelburne. Nor did Lee omit to express his approbation of the *coalition*, as a political union calculated to produce benefits to the country. During the whole time that I sat in parliament I never was present at a speech more personally abusive, or which would have better justified interruption. Kenyon, who was placed opposite to him on the treasury bench, and who was composed of as tough, as coarse, though not as boisterous materials; unable to support such a string of invectives, without manifesting his indignation, severely reprehended his learned friend, for "the swaggering language" to which he had recourse; strongly reprobating at the same time, Lee's expressions relative to the first lord of the treasury. No disposition being however shown to retract, or even to modify them, Rigby interposed with an apology for Lee, as being a young member. Like his friend Dundas, Rigby spoke and voted on that

night with ministry; but since his dismission from the pay-office, he seemed to have lost much of the imposing manner and style of speaking, which formerly characterised him when addressing the house. Great anxiety and agitation pervaded the ministerial benches, when at length the division took place. As no accurate opinion could be formed previous to the conclusion of the debate, on which side the members would preponderate, the result when announced from the chair, excited as much exultation among the adherents of Lord North and Fox, as it spread dismay through the ranks of administration.

I composed one of the majority, on that memorable occasion. But I owe it nevertheless to truth and to candour, which are the only guides or principles that I recognise, to acknowledge, that when I consider the articles of the peace concluded by Lord Shelburne, after the lapse of thirty years, I am inclined to view it through a much more favourable medium, than I did at the time. Unquestionably, of the *three* treaties, namely, those signed with *France, Spain, and America*;—for, with *Holland* no definitive convention had been arraigned;—the American treaty was much the most humiliating, as well as injurious to Great Britain. Besides the unconditional recognition of the independence of the colonies, and the cession of so many fortified places, which it is difficult to suppose that the Americans could ever have taken from us by force of arms; our abandoning the loyalists seemed, in the estimation of people, the most dispassionate, to affix a degree of degradation and dishonour on the nation itself. To Spain we likewise ceded East Florida, in addition to West Florida and Minorca, of both which, that power had already obtained possession. But in recompense for these sacrifices, it must be remembered, that France restored to us all our captured islands in the West Indies, with the single exception of Tobago; while we possessed nothing to offer her in return, except the restitution of St. Lucie. The stipulations made respecting our possessions in the East Indies; those concluded relative to the gum

trade, carried on along the coast of Africa; and the articles regulating the right of fishery on the banks of Newfoundland;—if not favourable or advantageous in themselves, might yet have been signed between two crowns treating nearly on equal terms. Nor when we consider the exhausted state of England at the close of the American war, could they justly be regarded as unbecoming us to concede, in order to dissolve the formidable combination then leagued against this country, which was sustained by the armed neutrality of the Baltic powers.

While, however, I thus readily admit Lord Shelburne's title to national approbation, if not gratitude, for the peace of January, 1783, though I voted against it as a member of the House of Commons, I must maintain, and I trust satisfactorily to prove, that if Lord North, instead of going out, as he did, in March, 1782, had remained in office ten months longer, he would have concluded at least as advantageous, if not a more beneficial treaty. We shall in fact find, on examining the subject, that Lord North either adopted or laid down all the foundations, on which his successor in office reared that superstructure. In other words, we must be compelled to perceive, that Lord Shelburne only used the materials left or provided him by his predecessor. The peace rested on seven distinct grounds or principles, of which the first was the recognition of American independence. But Lord North manifested a much greater readiness to obey the wishes of the House of Commons on that leading point, than was afterwards shown by Lord Shelburne, who did not yield till he was outvoted in the cabinet: whereas Lord North, after General Conway's successful motion of the 22d of February, declaring "the attempt to reduce the colonies to obedience by force, impracticable," immediately took measures for the purpose. On the 5th of March, a fortnight before he laid down his power, Wallace, then attorney general, moved in his place for leave to bring in a bill, "to enable his majesty to conclude a truce or peace with the revolted colonies in America." Fox affected to treat it with derision, because he feared its operation on parlia-

ment and on the public mind might prolong the existence of an administration which he had so nearly run down : but no impartial man questioned the first minister's sincerity ; and the victory of Congress in compelling Lord North, who had so long made war on them, to treat with America as a sovereign power, would have been more gratifying to the States than the same triumph obtained over any other minister of Great Britain.

The second cause that produced peace, was Sir George Rodney's victory over De Grasse ; which event, at once overturning all the plans of Vergennes in the West Indies, secured Jamaica from any further attack on the part of France. Of this splendid victory, though Fox reaped all the benefit, Lord North and Lord Sandwich had unquestionably the whole merit. We may even safely assert or assume, that if the Rockingham administration had forced their way into office three months earlier than they did, the action of the 12th of April, 1782, would never have taken place, or might have had a very different termination. It is not pretended that Pigot possessed any other merit than his connexion with Fox, cemented at Brookes's over the faro table. The measure itself, of sending him out to deprive Rodney of the command, excited just, as well as general indignation : nor did he perform a single act of energy after his arrival, which could have accelerated or facilitated the negotiations of peace ; though Fox admitted in the House of Commons, during the debate of the 21st February, 1782, that he was at the head of a fleet superior to the enemy, and adequate to every offensive or defensive operation. Eliott's destruction of the Spanish gun-boats before Gibraltar, on the 13th of September ; by overwhelming all the projects of Charles the Third for the reduction of that fortress, laid the third foundation of the treaty, as it disposed the cabinet of Madrid to terminate the war. Happily, Fox did not recall Eliott, as he had done Rodney, nor send Burgoyne to supercede him. Lord Howe's most able manœuvres in supplying Gibraltar with stores of every kind, notwithstanding the combined opposition of France and Spain, formed

the fourth groundwork of the peace. In the nomination of that great naval officer to the command of the fleet, and in that measure solely, had Lord Shelburne any participation or share, as contributing to terminate the contest. Nor would it be candid to deprive him of the merit which he may thereby claim ; but neither ought we to forget that Admiral Darby had effected the same service in the preceding year, under Lord North's administration, and had relieved Gibraltar in defiance of nearly similar impediments.

The three last foundations of general pacification, were laid in the east ; where, as early as 1778, Lord North had ably anticipated the French machinations, by getting possession of Pondicherry. Of these leading causes, the most essential, perhaps, may be deemed the separate peace made with the Mharattas : a measure exclusively due to that first minister, who in the spring of the year 1781, sent out Mr. Macpherson (since governor general of Bengal, and created a baronet), as a member of the supreme council. I know that his secret instructions were, to endeavour by every exertion in his power, and even, if necessary, by making considerable sacrifices, to terminate the Mharatta war. In compliance with those directions, on his arrival at Madras in October, 1781, without waiting to consult Hastings, who was then at a distance from Calcutta, Mr. Macpherson, together with Lord Macartney, Sir Edward Hughes, and the Nabob of Arcot, Mahomed Ally, acting together in concert, addressed letters jointly to the Peshwah, at Poonah, expressing to him, in the name of the sovereign and ministry of England, their sincere and ardent inclination to peace. It followed in a very short space of time, and flowed immediately from this source. Lord Sandwich, who sent out Sir Edward Hughes to command the British fleet in the East Indies, may claim the principal or exclusive merit of having laid the sixth basis of the pacification of January, 1783. For, though that naval commander did not vanquish Suffrein, as Rodney defeated De Grasse, yet he repulsed the French admiral, when we were inferior to him in number of ships ; disabled the

enemy's vessels, and finally compelled him to postpone his projects of co-operation with Hyder Ally ; thus protracting the contest till intelligence of a general pacification reached India.

The last groundwork of peace, was due to Hastings, acting as governor general of Bengal, in conjunction with the supreme council ; for the promptitude with which, after Hyder's successful irruption into the Carnatic in 1780, they despatched Sir Eyre Coote with military and pecuniary supplies, to the aid of that nearly subverted presidency. He first arrested the progress of the Sultan of Mysore, and finally compelled him to retreat across the mountains of the Ghauts, into his own dominions. The vast fabric of British power in the east, originally convulsed by the errors or incapacity of the Bombay government, degraded by Rumbold's mal-administration, and perhaps exposed to hazard by Hastings's plans of ambition or aggrandizement ; was ultimately preserved and strengthened. When we fairly examine and appreciate these facts, we shall see that though Lord Shelburne signed, or rather *concluded* the peace of 1783, yet Lord North's administration *made* it. In fact, though *no* minister, however able or popular, could have longer prosecuted the war for subjugating the colonies, after near seven years of a ruinous and disgraceful contest ; *any* minister, however moderately endowed with talents, having in his hands the means possessed by Lord Shelburne, might have terminated the struggle with our European enemies, on making the recognition of American independence. Unquestionably Lord Shelburne obtained from the French government, great restitutions in the West Indies : but the enemy kept possession of Tobago, and we restored St. Lucie ; which last island, considered as a military post, was inestimable to France. Powis's declaration on this great national subject, which he made in his place, when addressing the house, on the 21st of February, 1783 ; has always appeared to me to comprise in it, every thing that can be said with justice, either for, or against the peace in question. His words were nearly these : " With respect to the treaties just concluded, I have already admitted

that there are parts of them, which I wish not to have seen. But nevertheless, such is the condition of the country, such the state of our finances, and so powerful is the confederacy united against us, that I am ready to accept the peace, such as it is, and to say that it deserves parliamentary approbation." Few members of that assembly, united to a sound judgment, so much impartiality and public principle, as distinguished Mr. Powis.

Spain reaped the principal benefit of the treaty ; as, in addition to Minorca, she retained or acquired the two Floridas : these advantages were however dearly purchased by her severe losses before Gibraltar, in men, money, and ships. Louis the Sixteenth, besides Goree and Senegal on the Coast of Africa, which possessions rendered him master of the gum trade ; recovered the islands, of St. Pierre and Miquelon, situate in the river St. Laurence. Pondicherry, together with the French factories throughout Hindostan, were likewise restored by us : but Holland in recompense for her unwise, as well as unjust aggression lost Negapatam, her only settlement of importance on the coast of Coromandel. America triumphed in the contest ; and the greatest statesmen whom England had produced, though they concurred in scarcely any other political opinion, yet agreed on the point, that with the defalcation of the thirteen colonies from the crown, the glory and greatness of Britain were permanently extinguished. This sentiment pervaded Lord Chatham's last speech, pronounced on the 7th of April, 1778. " I will never consent," exclaimed he, " to deprive the royal offspring of the House of Brunswick, the heirs of the Princess Sophia, of their fairest inheritance. Where is the man who will dare to advise such a measure ? " He considered it as a consummation pregnant with the greatest national misfortunes. Lord Shelburne even surpassed him in expressions of despair, at contemplating the consequences inevitably resulting, as he conceived, from the loss of America. Not once, but many times, he repeated this sentiment, in the House of Peers, previous, as well as subsequent to, his becoming first minister. On the 10th of

July, 1782, when constituted first lord of the treasury, he declared that "when-ever the British parliament should recognize the sovereignty of the thirteen colonies, the sun of England's glory was for ever set. — He looked for a spark at least to be left, which might light us up in time to a new day. But if independence were once conceded, if parliament considered that measure to be advisable, he foresaw in his own mind that England was undone." It seemed impossible to clothe his ideas of despair, in stronger or more energetic language. Lord George Germain entertained, as I know, similar apprehensions. Speaking in the House of Commons, on the 12th December, 1781, he maintained, as a position admitting of no doubt, that "from the instant when American independence should be acknowledged, the British empire was ruined." I heard Dunning make almost the same declaration, on that very night. Although he spoke and voted with opposition, yet he concurred with the colonial secretary in opinion, that the ruin of the country would be accomplished, whenever America should be recognized as independent. Here we have four individuals, all distinguished by pre-eminent talents, denouncing national ruin, as inseparable from the loss of America. The same sentiment had impressed all classes of men throughout the country. How are we to account for the non-fulfilment of these predictions? How was the threatened calamity averted; and by what measures was Great Britain, after losing thirteen colonies, rendered more formidable, wealthy, commercial, and great, than before her misfortunes? Three causes appear to me to have principally produced so extraordinary a phenomenon, which has no parallel in the history of nations.

The first and leading cause was, the preservation of the British Constitution. Lord North, though he lost armies, commercial fleets, garrisons, islands, and provinces; yet defended and preserved the palladium of civil liberty. He transmitted to Lord Rockingham, in March, 1782, as he had received from the Duke of Grafton, in January, 1770, that invaluable possession, inviolate. No minister of George the Third more highly esti-

mated its blessings, or held its preservation nearer his heart. When, on the 21st of February, 1783, Sir Cecil Wray, then member for Westminster, accused him of blindly maintaining the prerogative of *the crown* on all occasions; he justified himself, in language equally dignified and convincing, from the imputation. I was present, and heard him. "I do not know, nor can I conceive," said Lord North, "on what premises, the honorable member forms his logical conclusion. I certainly have frequently asserted, and I have uniformly maintained, the prerogative of *parliament* to bind and legislate for those colonies, which were then united to Great Britain, by every bond of duty and obedience. But I defy him, or any man, to specify a single instance in which I ever attributed to *the crown*, any other prerogative than is vested in it by our Constitution; or than a king of this country is acknowledged to possess by every sound *Whig*, and by all those authors who have written on the side of freedom. I never did, nor ever wished to extend the power of that branch of the legislature, one inch beyond the limits prescribed to it by law. And however loudly clamour has been raised against me, as a minister who desired to govern only by the influence of the crown, I trust, the charge has been already found wholly untrue." Our obligations to him are great and indelible: for never perhaps did any minister surmount more severe attacks than he endured. The losses and disgraces of the American war, followed by heavy annual loans, gave rise to meetings and associations, whose professed object was not only a change of administration, but to effect reforms and alterations in the parliamentary representation. These convocations of freeholders, which began in the county of York, towards the end of 1779, soon spread over the kingdom, and were adopted in the capital, at an early period of the year 1780.

Their resolutions, patriotic in profession, and perhaps in their intention, were not the less revolutionary in practice. Like the clubs at Paris in 1790, they immediately appointed *corresponding committees*, whose duty it was to prepare *plans of association* for ameliorating the Constitution. Men of the

highest rank, of the largest property, and of the most unsullied character, carried along by the torrent, and impatient to overturn the ministry, lent themselves to the accomplishment of this work. As early as February, 1780, Sir George Savile, when presenting in the House of Commons, the York petition, accompanied it with language such as Ireton or Fleetwood might have used, when addressing the rump parliament in 1652 : Language calculated to intimidate, and appealing obviously to external interference. These menaces were outdone by Sir James Lowther, in April of the same year, on bringing up the petition from Cumberland. He, whom "Junius" denominates "the little contemptible tyrant of the north," threatened in his place, that if "the grievances enumerated were not redressed, the subscribers would withhold the taxes;" thus attempting to overawe the legislative body whom he addressed. Fox, as might well be imagined, far exceeded his adherents, in the violence of his appeal to the people. On the 6th of April, 1780, the *corresponding committee* having convened the inhabitants of Westminster, in Palace Yard, Fox read, and commented on the report presented by that committee; while the Dukes of Devonshire and of Portland were present at his side : but the Marquis of Rockingham absented himself. Government having very properly ordered out a body of the military force, for the protection of parliament, and suppression of tumult or violence; Fox proceeded so far as to declare in the House of Commons, that "if soldiers were thus let loose on the constitutional assemblages of the people, all who attended them must go armed." The Cardinal de Retz, when conducting the Parisian populace, and attempting to overturn the first minister of that day, held and practised precisely the same doctrine. So would Mirabeau have done in our time; or Sir Francis Burdett, and Horne Tooke.

Even previous to the actual commencement of the American war, as early as 1774, attempts were made by the enemies of government, to excite the shipwrights and other artificers in the royal dock yards, to *associate*, to *remonstrate*, and in fact to assume a *deliberative pub-*

lic character. I was present in the House of Commons, when Sir Hugh Palliser related and detailed this curious fact, respecting which, no man could speak with more accuracy, as he presided at the navy board when the transaction took place. Mr. Minchin, member for Oakhampton, a gentleman whom I very particularly knew, having brought forward a discussion relative to the condition of the navy, in the month of March, 1781, with a view to criminate Lord Sandwich, then first lord of the admiralty; Sir Hugh, in justification of that nobleman, stated broadly, that "the enemies of the country had found means to frustrate his plans for regulating the dock yards, on new principles of great public utility." In fact, the workmen were secretly instigated to insubordination. "*Associations*," Palliser declared, "were formed among them. *Remonstrances*, clothed under the name of petitions, were transmitted to the navy board; *committees* were appointed. *Nay, deputies or delegates* were sent up to London, empowered by their constituents to treat with the commissioners of the navy, in the nature of a *Congress*." Notwithstanding the laughter which the word *Congress* produced from both sides of the assembly, when it was pronounced; yet Burke, anxious to efface the impression made by the narrative of Palliser, endeavoured to render it ridiculous; and justified particularly the associations formed, as well as the petitions presented; which were, he said, intended for preventing the lavish expenditure of the public money. But Bamber Gascoyne instantly stood forward to protect his friend, Sir Hugh. Gascoyne, with whom I was well acquainted, represented at that time the borough of Truro, and had besides a seat at the admiralty board. He possessed a clear and sound understanding, with a most convivial disposition; though not a very cultivated mind, nor highly polished manners. Rough, frank, and manly, he was not intimidated by Burke's eloquence. In terms the most positive, he confirmed Palliser's account of the delegates; adding, that "the whole mischief was effected by the enemies of England, whether foreign or domestic, he would not assert; who stimulated the inferior orders of people

to associate, to form committees of correspondence, and to throw the nation into a ferment." Indignant at such a charge, which involved himself and all the opposition leaders, in the guilt of acts approaching to treason, Burke, starting up, called Mr. Gascoyne to order: but he, appealing to the chair against the interruption, Burke, scarcely under the dominion of reason, exclaimed, that "if the honorable gentleman proceeded any further, in accusing that side of the house with such nefarious proceedings, he would move to have the words taken down." Far from being terrified at this menace, or affected by the cries uttered from the opposition benches, of "Take down! Take down!" Gascoyne, with perfect calmness assured the house, that no clamour would deter him from performing his duty. He then repeated verbatim his preceding words; declaring, that if any gentleman now wished to have them taken down, he would assist him by pronouncing them distinctly a third time. But not an individual rose, and Gascoyne was permitted to continue his speech without further molestation. Yet Fox was present at this scene, the particulars of which I relate as they passed under my own eyes.

How subversive of the Constitution, and how destructive of all subordination to government, were Fox's avowed opinions, while he was in opposition, on the right of the people to appoint delegates, and thereby to dictate their pleasure to parliament; was apparent from his speeches or declarations on various occasions. I recollect one in particular, that I witnessed, the impression of which will not easily be erased from my mind. On the 2d of April, 1781, Mr. Duncombe, one of the two representatives for the county of York, having, in the absence of Sir George Savile, presented a petition to the House of Commons, from several *associated counties*, signed by certain freeholders, whom he denominated *delegates*; Daniel Parker Coke (the *Andrew Marvel* of that time), strenuously opposed its reception. He approved indeed highly, he said, the object of the petition, and would support it: but not the nomination of delegates, whom he considered to

be altogether unconstitutional, as well as dangerous. In this sentiment he was sustained by Powis, member for the county of Northampton. Dunning, on the other hand, whose *law* always appeared to me to be under the control of his *politics*; and who did not then foresee how soon he should be translated to the upper house of parliament, as well as to a place in the cabinet, and to the chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster; undertook to defend the legal or constitutional right of the subject to nominate delegates. But Fox rising in his place, far exceeded him in boldness of affirmation, and in violence of language. "I will not sit here, Mr. Speaker," exclaimed he, "and hear the assertion, that it is unconstitutional or illegal to appoint *delegates*; or that those delegates so named, should petition parliament. I consider it, on the contrary, not merely as a correct and authorized, but as a laudable measure, in the present condition and circumstances of this country. By what law is it declared to be unconstitutional, for the people of England to name delegates *who shall reside in London, and watch over the conduct of their representatives*? And who shall presume to impede those delegates so constituted, from petitioning parliament in loyal and respectful terms? Do they lose the privilege of a freeholder, because they assume the title of a delegate?—Certainly not. I should have been ready to sign the petition now brought up, in my *delegated* capacity; and I would have defended it in my *representative* character, within the walls of this house, as a faithful representative of the people." Whether such opinions are patriotic, or factious; whether they can be maintained and acted upon, without inevitably producing confusion; whether any man can assume two public characters of a political description, the duties of which may be incompatible and contradictory;—are questions which must be left to every person's decision. These principles appear to me to be, not merely democratic or republican, but subversive of all good government: fit only for the jacobins of France in the beginning of the revolution; or for the modern reformers, the *Watsons*, the *Thistlewoods*, the *Brandreths*, and the

other advocates of insurrection, who wish to overturn the present order of things. Fox, indeed, was wholly guiltless, I am persuaded, of any such intention. His only aim was, by means of this scaffolding, to drive Lord North from power, to force his own way into the closet, and to compel the king to change his administration. But, his ambition, like that of Pitt, was not under the control of judgment, self-command, and moderation. George the Third very properly availed himself of Fox's errors, to expel him from the cabinet, which he twice entered by storm.

Nor were these delegates the only adversaries with whom Lord North had to contend, when defending the Constitution. "The coldest bodies," says Junius, "warm with opposition; the hardest sparkle in collision." Burke, who, ten years later, drew forth his powerful artillery in defence of monarchy, lent himself too much, at this period of his political life, it must reluctantly be owned, to the machinations of party. Many of his parliamentary speeches between 1779 and 1782, breathe the spirit of faction, blended with intemperance of language, sometimes descending even to invective. Dunning, though brought up to the bar, and possessed of an ample fortune acquired by his profession, yet levelled a vital blow at the Constitution of his country, when, on the 24th of April, 1780, he moved in the House of Commons, "not to dissolve parliament, or to prorogue the session, till proper measures should be adopted for diminishing the influence of the crown, and correcting the other evils complained of in the petitions." Algernon Sydney, or General Ludlow, the most determined republicans of the seventeenth century, could not have made a proposition more subversive in its results of monarchical government. It is obvious that if such a resolution had passed, the king would have stood in the situation of Charles the First in 1641: as the parliament would have been placed in the very position of the House of Commons, at that awful period of our history. Happily, Dunning's motion was rejected by a majority of fifty-one votes, in a very full house. Fox, irritated to the most violent degree at the subversion of his hopes to drive

Lord North from power, attributed his disappointment to the operation of ministerial corruption among the members who voted on the occasion. It unquestionably resulted, however, from the alarm excited among the moderate, independent part of the assembly, who desired, indeed, to limit and to reform, but not to annihilate the power of the crown. No man can doubt, that if the prerogative of prorogation and of dissolution had been taken from the sovereign, till every alleged grievance had been redressed, the Constitution must have been from that moment subverted; and a renewal of the calamities of Charles the First's reign must almost inevitably have followed. To Lord North, therefore, sustained by the king's firmness of character, we owe our preservation from all the evils of a republican, if not a revolutionary form of government. Since 1688, down to the year 1792, when we were menaced with the still greater horrors of French fraternisation, it may be safely asserted that the British Constitution never incurred so imminent a danger of subversion as in 1780.

To Mr. Pitt we are indebted for the second leading cause or principle of our national resuscitation and recovery, after losing America. His institution of the sinking fund of a million sterling, in the spring of 1786, by its beneficial operation on the public credit, commerce, and finances, might be said to revivify the state, and still continues to dispense with augmenting powers its salutary influence. The third source of our prosperity came from the east, where, without a metaphor, the sun of Britain rose, as it set in the west. Since 1783, our acquisitions and possessions in that portion of the globe have been perpetually in a state of progression. All our losses on the Delaware and on the Chesapeake, have been more than compensated by our conquests on the Ganges, or on the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar. The augmentations of territory in Oude, as well as in Corah and Dooab, including Delhi itself, the metropolis of the Mogul princes; the seizure of the Carnatic; the dissolution of the Mysore monarchy in the person of Tippoo Sultan; the reduction of Ceylon, of the Cape of Good Hope, and of the Island

of Mauritius, not to mention many inferior objects of attention: these prodigious accumulations of commerce, power, and wealth, have obliterated almost the recollections of the American struggle, and have closed all the wounds caused by that unfortunate war. An annual revenue of more than fifteen millions sterling, raised in India, payable, not in paper, but in specie; together with the trade of the east continually poured into our harbours, have enabled us, after contending for nearly twenty years with the power of France, successively wielded by Robespierre and by Bonaparte, to terminate the conflict in the most triumphant manner. I return to the progress of public affairs.

However readily I admit that the treaty of 1783 may be entitled to national approval, yet the members of that administration, at the head of which *Lord North* had so long presided, might, nevertheless, be fully justified in severely arraigning a peace, which relinquished to America almost every point or object, for the maintenance of which *they* had contended from 1775, down to 1782. *They* might justly feel indignant at the dereliction of the loyalists; at the evacuation of New York and Charles Town; and at the sacrifice of immense tracts of territory, extending through near twenty degrees of latitude, and as many of longitude; including Indian nations our allies, and containing incalculable commercial advantages. When Lord Sackville and Lord Stormont, in the House of Peers, compared such a treaty with past periods of our history; when they accused the ministry of doing acts more culpable, than even Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke had committed at Utrecht: they might at least be considered as speaking with consistency, and in conformity to their avowed principles. But I own that it seems more difficult to conceive, and to explain, upon what ground Fox could justly reprobate such preliminaries. *He* had loudly and repeatedly declaimed, for successive years, on the indispensable necessity of obtaining almost any peace, however comparatively bad it might be, as imperiously demanded by the fallen condition of Great Britain.

I perfectly remember, as early as the

beginning of the month of March, 1781, when during a debate relative to the loan concluded by Lord North, the prospect of peace being incidently mentioned as a probable event, Fox eagerly seized the occasion to declare that "he was ready to support *almost any terms* that the enemy would offer for a general peace: meaning thereby to include France, Spain, and Holland, as well as America." He added, "that while the national concerns were conducted by the ministers of that period, *no peace could be bad.*" Yet he declaimed, if possible, with more vehemence and asperity against the Earl of Shelburne, than he had done against Lord North. *He*, who considering the Americans as originally justified in resisting the mother country, had often undertaken their defence in the House of Commons; while he always stigmatized the loyalists with every opprobrious or contemptuous epithet. *He*, whom I had myself heard declare from the same side of the house, not twelve months before, on the 5th day of March, 1782, that "whenever he should enter into any terms with an individual of Lord North's cabinet, he would rest satisfied to be called the most infamous of mankind." Adding, that "he never could nourish the idea of coalescing with ministers, who had proved themselves devoid of honour and honesty; as, in the hands of such men, he would not for a moment entrust his own honour." To varnish over, therefore, so complete a change of language, sentiments, and system, required all those talents, that bold eloquence, and disregard of, or superiority to public opinion, which met in *him*. I never indeed regarded him as animated by any other motives, in his opposition to the peace of 1783, than ambition and desire of power. Personally odious to the king, as he well knew himself to be, on account of his private irregularities, not less than from the line of political action which he had embraced during many years; he beheld no mode or chance of speedily entering the cabinet, except by uniting at once with Lord North. Those persons who think that abilities such as his, ought not to have been lost to his country, or excluded from the councils of the crown; will however

see cause probably, to justify in some degree, his sacrifice of political principle, to an over-ruling necessity. But it became apparent by the events that soon followed the coalition of 1783, how different a sentence the majority of the nation passed on that memorable union. The people beheld in it, a complete renunciation of every object for which Fox had affected to contend; and they regarded, not merely with indifference, but with satisfaction, his subsequent expulsion from office.

Lord North's junction with the party which had so long opposed him, has always appeared to me to admit of much more palliation in every point of view, than the conduct of Fox and his adherents. The former nobleman, by no means in very affluent circumstances, encumbered with a numerous family, saw himself proscribed and excluded from the cabinet, for having unsuccessfully maintained the prerogative of the crown, and the supremacy of parliament against the American insurgents. In this situation, unprotected by the sovereign, who was unable to extend any assistance to him; and unpopular with the nation, because he had been unsuccessful; Fox opened his arms, and offered him an alliance. Was he bound to reject it, and thus pass a sentence of political exclusion on himself? But even if he had so done, worse evils presented themselves in prospect. A union between Fox and Pitt, if it had taken place, would have eventually produced, in all probability, his own impeachment, and that of other members of his cabinet. Nor could he have found any effectual security from such a prosecution, either in the royal authority, in the adherence of the House of Commons, or in the affection of the country. He might have been made the victim and the sacrifice for the loss of empire; for the disgraces, defeats, capitulations, and ruinous expenditure, of an unfortunate war. Fox and Burke had a hundred times menaced him with the block. Pitt, who, it was evident, entertained similar opinions respecting his administration, did not at all conceal them.

Powis, when declaiming against the coalition recently made between Lord North and Fox, on the 21st of Fe-

bruary, observed, that "to the ill-timed lenity of Lord Shelburne's administration, it could alone be imputed, that the noble lord in the blue ribband enjoyed his present situation of impunity. For, if those inquiries which had once been in contemplation, had been carried into effect, the House of Commons would not have witnessed on the present occasion, the extraordinary and unnatural alliance formed against ministers." Sir Edward Asley, one of the representatives for the county of Norfolk, who, though a man of no shining ability, justly excited respect as a country gentleman, expressed similar opinions on the same night. So did other members of the house, upon various occasions. Sir Charles Turner, in his homely Yorkshire dialect, exclaimed, "The noble lord in the blue ribband is the author of all our misfortunes! If he and his colleagues had been impeached, as it was the duty of this house to have done, other ministers would have been deterred from treading in their steps. But now they see that delinquency forms the high road to preferment, and if any man of talents within these walls, will sell his conscience, I will ensure him a peerage. The commission of political crimes leads infallibly to titles, pensions, and ribbands. By accepting the overtures of the Rockingham party, Lord North therefore at least secured his personal safety, and opened to himself an avenue to the resumption of power. It was not, as I have always thought, the act of uniting with Fox, that in itself disgraced him; but the too ready subserviency with which he afterwards lent himself to every measure, which that enterprising and ambitious statesman, having again forced his way into the cabinet, thought it necessary to adopt, in order to maintain himself in a situation, which he had attained in contradiction to the wishes of his sovereign.

[21st February.] The victory obtained by the new coalition, over ministers, in the House of Commons, however flattering it might be to their hopes, yet being by no means decisive; and the peace having been approved in the upper house though only by a small majority of thirteen; — in order to compel Lord Shelburne's resignation,

it became necessary to express in more affirmative language, a parliamentary disapprobation of the preliminaries. For this purpose, four days after the first debate, a second discussion took place, when a motion or resolution to the effect above mentioned, was brought forward; Lord John Cavendish lending himself again to introduce the business. It was indeed a service of some danger and delicacy, requiring all the reputation which that nobleman enjoyed for political rectitude, to protect his friends from the imputations excited by the *coalition*. Mr. Secretary Townsend, in the course of the debate that ensued, paid many compliments to Lord John's candour and honesty of intention, at the expense of his understanding, or rather, of his firmness. "I have," observed he, "the most implicit reliance on the integrity and honour of that noble person; who, from the dictates of his own generous mind, would not act uncandidly by any administration: but he may be led aside, in consequence of the respect which he entertains for others, *who know how to choose their man*, whenever they want any business to be effected, which is not evidently right in itself. I am perfectly convinced that my noble friend is not the author of the resolutions that he has proposed; and if ministers were to be judged by his head and heart, I should not fear to make the treaties just concluded, appear to him a real blessing to this country." Lord John endeavoured to justify the recent coalition, against the severe animadversions of Powis, and of other members who had generally voted with the Rockingham party; by comparing Fox's union with Lord North, to the administration formed in June, 1757, when the first Mr. Pitt coalesced with the Duke of Newcastle, whom he had during many years opposed and reprobated. But however analogous in many respects that transaction might be, yet it certainly failed in carrying the moral conviction to the minds of his hearers, which Lord John aspired to produce by his comparison.

The peace was again attacked and defended on its own proper merits, at great length, with equal ingenuity, asperity, and profound knowledge of the subject.

Fox's speech, though it displayed admirable ability, as well as prodigious information, embracing all the great interests and possessions of the empire, commercial or political, in its range; yet wanted, as I thought, that triumphant spirit which commonly animated and characterized his eloquence. He, no doubt, anticipated the event of the evening, as almost certain; and consequently beheld before him, the way open into the cabinet. But he had sacrificed, if not public principle, at least, public opinion, to gratify his ambition. When he looked round him, many vacancies were visible on the opposition benches; where, in place of his former friends, he now saw only the adherents of Lord North, so lately his bitterest adversaries. He was unquestionably sensible to the circumstance, and he laboured hard to erase the unfavourable impression, which he well knew, his junction with a nobleman whom he had so lately reprobated, must excite in every mind divested of party feelings. — "I believe," said he, "that there is scarcely an individual within these walls, who would give to the present first minister, his free and spontaneous support. Has he not made in every quarter of the globe, concessions the most important, without even a pretence of any equivalent? Then let not my coalition with the noble lord near me, be considered as resulting in any degree from the *res angusta domi*. Such a motive never can influence men of integrity. Nor let it be asserted that such a junction against a minister, is unconstitutional. For, while we admit in the most extended sense, the king's prerogative of ministerial appointment, the people can by their privilege annul the nomination. It is only a coalition, that can repair the decayed system of administration, and give it the tone of vigorous exertion. By it we shall regain the lost confidence of the nation, and give effect to the springs of government. The obnoxious part of the cabinet must recede from the presence of the sovereign. He possesses neither the sanction of the people, nor of parliament." Such was Fox's language on that memorable night.

Those who heard Mr. Pitt address the house on the same evening, cannot easily forget the impression made upon his audi-

ence, by a speech which might be said to unite all the powers of argument, eloquence, and impassioned declamation. He seemed to fight, indeed, as Cæsar did at Munda, not merely for empire, or for power; but for life. After defending article by article, the treaties concluded; he finished by deprecating “the ill-omened and baneful alliance” which had just taken place between Lord North and Fox, as teeming with pernicious effects of every kind to the country. Then reverting to the consequences which it might produce personally to himself, he professed his readiness to retire to a private station without regret. Alluding to so material an impending change in his own condition, he exclaimed,

“Fortuna sævo læta negotio, et
Ludum insolentem ludere pertinax,
Transmutat incertas honores,
Nunc mihi, nunc alii benigna.
Laudo manentem : si celeres quatit
Pennas, resigno quæ dedit.”——

With a presence of mind which never forsook him, he here paused; and, conscious that the words of the Roman poet immediately following, “*et mea virtute me involvo*,” might seem to imply a higher idea of his own merit or disinterestedness, than it would become him to avow, he cast his eyes on the floor. A moment or two of silence elapsed while all attention was directed towards him from every quarter of the house. During this interval, he slowly drew his handkerchief from his pocket; passed it once or twice across his lips; and then recovering as it were from his temporary embarrassment, he added with emphasis, striking his hand on the table,

“—— probamque
Pauperiem sine dote quæro.”

Perhaps a more masterly and beautiful piece of oratorical acting, is not to be found in antiquity. Even if we suppose the whole passage to have been studied and prepared, yet the delicacy of the omission is not less admirable. I believe, however, that both the lines which he cited, and the one which he suppressed, were all equally suggested to him by his feelings and his judgment at the time.

Its effect on that part of the house which perfectly understood it, corresponded to its merit. But Mr. Pitt, who well knew how large a part of his audience, especially among the country gentlemen, were little conversant in the writings of the Augustan age, or familiar with Horace, always displayed great caution in borrowing from those classic sources. In the lapse of near fourteen years that I have heard him almost daily address the House of Commons, I question if he made in all, more than eight or ten citations. Fox and Sheridan, though not equally severe in that respect, yet never abused, or injudiciously expended the stores of ancient literature that they possessed. Burke’s enthusiasm, his exhaustless memory, and luxuriant imagination, more frequently carried him away into the times of Virgil and Cicero: while Barré usually condescended, whenever he quoted Latin, to translate for the benefit of the country members.

I have already said that the chancellor of the exchequer excited admiration by his speech in defence of the peace. There was indeed, throughout the whole of that most eloquent address, a pathos, an emotion, and an animation, of which, even in him, I hardly ever witnessed any similar exhibition, while I sat in parliament. If Lord Shelburne’s ministry could have been propped or preserved, it must have been upheld by such a man, and by such exertions. Over Fox and Lord North, Pitt seemed to assume a moral superiority; and, if I may so express myself, to look down upon them from the eminence on which he stood: — not the eminence of power or of office, but of conscious rectitude, untainted with party spirit, and disdaining to sacrifice principle for place; while he beheld *them* floundering in the mire of ambition. Addressing himself to Fox, at the commencement of his speech, “The triumphs of party,” exclaimed he, “with which the right honorable gentleman seems so highly elate, shall never seduce *me* to commit any act, which even suspicion can condemn. I will never engage in political enmities, without a public cause. I never will forego such enmities, without the public approbation. Nor will I ever be questioned and cast off in the face of this assembly, by one virtuous and dis-

satisfied friend. These, the permanent triumphs of reason and principle, over the profligate inconsistencies of party violence; these, the triumphs of virtue over success itself, shall not only be mine on the present occasion, but throughout every future condition of my life."

The coalition, though supported by superiority of numbers, and conducted by extraordinary talents, as well as energies; shrunk, as I thought, under the castigation thus inflicted, to which Fox made no reply. After having depicted in a masterly manner, not less lucid and distinct, though less verbose than Fox; the fallen state of the British empire and of its resources, at the beginning of 1783; he alluded with surprising delicacy and beauty, to its widely different position in 1763, when the great Earl of Chatham, his father, had placed it on the summit of national glory. Could his majesty's present ministers," said he, "thus surrounded, as we are, with scenes of calamity, attempt to dictate terms of pacification to the confederate powers? — Even the Dutch had not been disarmed or conciliated by the humiliating language of the late foreign secretary. Should we have persevered from day to day, in throwing the desperate die? Can the articles of peace now accepted, suffer in any serious comparison with the treaty of Paris? — There was, indeed, a time, when this country might have dictated conditions to her enemies! And if an imagination, warmed with the power and prosperity of Great Britain, could have diverted any member of the present cabinet, from a painful perception of the truth, I may, I hope, without presumption, have been entitled to that indulgence. I well recollect how much my childhood was animated by the recital of England's victories. I was instructed by one, whose memory I must ever cherish and revere, that at the termination of a contest, widely different from the present, we had prescribed the terms of peace to submissive nations. This was the æra of our splendour; in contemplating which I may be allowed to feel a more than common interest. But that æra is fled! We are now under the mortifying necessity of adopt-

ing with our altered condition. All the visions of our power and pre-eminence have passed away."

Noble and affecting as was this picture, drawn by such a hand, and on such an occasion; I am not sure whether it was not outdone by other passages, in the course of the same evening. His two portraits, of Lord Shelburne, and of Lord North, though I may not altogether admit their truth in every particular, were master-pieces of talent. "From the complexion of this evening's debate," observed Pitt, "it appears obvious that the motions originate, rather in the desire of driving the Earl of Shelburne from the treasury, than in any conviction that ministers merit censure for the concessions made in order to obtain peace. Concessions arising from an insurmountable necessity, and imputable solely to the cabinet of which the noble lord in the blue ribband was the head. The minister who now presides in the councils of the crown, like every other individual eminent for ability, and placed in high office, becomes naturally an object of envy. The *obloquy*, to which his capacity and his elevation subject him, has been created and circulated with equal meanness and address: but his merits are as much above my encomiums, as *the arts to which he owes his defamation* are beneath my notice. When, bereft of power, he descends into life, without the invidious appendages of place; mankind will view him through a different medium, and perceive in him qualities richly entitling him to their esteem." — "My particular share of the censure pointed against ministers, I will support with fortitude, because I have not acted wrong. My own heart, a monitor which never yet did, and I trust, never will deceive me, constitutes my asylum against clamour and faction. I felt no extraordinary eagerness to come in, and I shall experience no reluctance to go out, whenever the public may think proper to dismiss me from their service." — "I repeat, that whatever may appear humiliating or inadequate, in the treaties now laid upon the table, is exclusively and wholly chargeable to the noble lord in the blue ribband. His profusion of the public money, his notorious temerity and pertinacity in prosecu-

ting the war for reducing America to submission ; — a contest which originated in his pernicious and oppressive policy ; when added to his utter inability for filling the station which he occupied ; — these circumstances have rendered peace, almost of any description, indispensable for the extrication of the state." I will fairly confess, that though I voted against ministers on that night, yet Mr. Pitt never appeared in my eyes, an object of more just admiration, than when on the point of laying down his power. Such, I believe, to have been the sentiment universally felt, not less by his opponents, than by his supporters.

While however I do him this justice, I cannot pass over in silence the part which Lord North performed, on an occasion which demanded all his exertions. He rose soon after Pitt concluded, and rarely have I witnessed, even from *him*, an exhibition of greater talent. "The last speaker," observed he, "whose amazing eloquence has so deeply impressed and affected every person in this audience, does me the honour to select me as the object of his thunder. And it constitutes no slender presumption of my innocence, that I have heard him thunder without experiencing any dismay. I have even listened to his thunder, with equal astonishment and delight. But I call on him, and on every individual who hears me, to attest my declaration, that I have never abandoned in a single instance, my character, my connections, or my political principles. I have been, and I am ready to meet, without subterfuge or evasion, the most scrupulous inquiry into every action of my life. I am ready, even at this instant, to stand forth, and to bid defiance to every species of investigation. Conscious of my rectitude of intention, I labour under no apprehension, either of incurring censure, or of deserving punishment." Then alluding to his junction with Fox, after having spoken of his abilities, in terms of the warmest panegyric. Lord North added, "it is true that during my administration, when I was vilified and abused, as every unfortunate minister must be, he often ran me hard, and made me the object of his severe animadversion. But however deficient

in capacity must have been my official conduct, I trust it will be admitted that I never wanted zeal to promote the true interests of my country, according to my conception of them. And notwithstanding the asperity with which he frequently treated me, as well as my measures, I do not recollect his ever charging me with the direct want of integrity. I know his temper to be warm ; but he is of a generous nature, open, sincere, and manly. While I admire the vast extent of his mind, I can rely with security, on the goodness of his heart. And our principles, which were adverse, being now congenial, we shall unite all our energies in the cause of Great Britain." We must admit that a more eloquent and able defence of the *coalition*, could not have been pronounced. The public, nevertheless, viewed it through other optics, and considered it as a mutual sacrifice of political principle.

A minority of *seventeen*, in which the ministry remained at the close of the debate, which took place at a very late hour, and in a very crowded House of Commons, where near four hundred members voted ; seemed to secure the triumph of the *coalition*. Yet as no direct censure had hitherto been passed upon the administration ; and as the condemnation expressed relative to the peace, was couched in very moderate terms ; simply stating that "the concessions made, were greater than our adversaries were entitled to demand ;" it did not by any means follow, that a change in the government would take place. Lord North himself had sufficiently demonstrated, during the two sessions of 1779 and 1780, how little effect a majority had, in compelling him to retire from office : and the political, if not moral disapprobation, felt at the recent junction of two men who had so long condemned and reprobated each other, pervaded to a certain degree, all ranks. Of this mortifying fact, Fox very early received the most unequivocal proofs. Powis had commented on it with great acrimony. Sir Cecil Wray, Fox's colleague for Westminster, rising in his place, during the debate which we have just reviewed ; exclaimed, "I am told that a coalition has taken place with that ministry, to whose mal-administration is

alone imputable the distressed condition of the country, which render necessary the present peace. What opinion may be entertained by other gentlemen, I know not: but for my own part, I solemnly declare, I never will support an administration so composed, nor any administration, of which Lord North forms a part." Mr. Duncombe, one of the two representatives of the county of York, expressed himself, if possible, in stronger language, only three days after the debate of the 21st of February. Having presented a petition to the house from near ten thousand freeholders of Yorkshire, demanding a more equal representation in parliament; he took occasion to say, that "it would be with reluctance, he should support any administration, of which Lord North was a member." Burke, no doubt thinking to efface the impression, instantly stood up, and remarked with some asperity, that "as to parliamentary support, it ought neither to be given, nor to be withheld, on account of men, but of measures." "Adding, "the honorable gentleman appears to be of a different sentiment, as he informs us, he will consider men and not measures." Duncombe, however, not intimidated by the correction, observed, that "he might have expressed himself incorrectly in making use of the term *reluctance*." "I will, therefore," continued he, "amend it, and declare that I never will lend my support to such an administration. In thus speaking of the noble lord, I wish to have it understood, that I have in view, the measures, as well as the man; for, from his past measures, I appreciate the man."

Mr. Walter Stanhope, then member for Hull, retorted on Burke for his versatility. "I own it astonishes me," said he, "to find that the noble lord's defender, is the very person who has more than once declared him a fit object of impeachment; nay, who went so far as to assert in this house, that he had an impeachment ready drawn in his pocket." Such were the humiliating reflections or animadversions, to which the coalition gave rise, among men most attached to Fox, and to the Rockingham party! Mr. Hill, who represented Shropshire, and who was afterwards better known in the

annals of parliament, as Sir Richard; accustomed to borrow his allusions from holy writ, compared the junction of Lord North and his new associate, to the union between Herod and Pontius Pilate. Even Sir Charles Turner, a man devoted to Fox, and who so implicitly adopted all his political opinions, as in general to retain none of his own, yet recoiled at the union; of which he expressed himself, when addressing the house, in that plain, unadorned, but emphatic style, natural to him. "The *coalition*," exclaimed he, "has astonished the whole nation, and no individual more than myself. I am sorry for it, as my worthy friend Charles has materially injured himself by it. He has lost much of his popularity. The noble lord with whom he has coalesced, is undoubtedly the best of men, considered as a private character: but as a minister he has been most unfortunate. I reprobate therefore the alliance between them. It will turn out ill, and never answer the expectations of its authors." Even the very majority which had disapproved of the treaties, as inadequate to our just expectations, yet might not follow up their vote by any personal attack on ministers; or if they did, might fail to carry the house with them. And in that event, the coalition would remain seated, as before, on the opposition bench, without deriving any benefit from their late success. A first lord of the treasury, who, to conscious integrity, joined fortitude and resources of character, seemed exempt from any necessity of resigning, on account of the danger of impeachment; and might still, by protracting the struggle, terminate it advantageously to himself. Such were the opinions at that time generally entertained, and the expectations formed, both in, and out of parliament.

[22d — 28th February.] But all these political speculations were suddenly overturned by Lord Shelburne's immediate resignation. Without waiting for any broader hint, or trying by any exertions to perpetuate his possession of power, he retired from ministry, as so many of his predecessors had done during the present reign. There has always appeared to be something mysterious or unexplained, in the motives which im-

pelled him thus precipitately, if not prematurely, to abandon a situation which he had attained with so much labour, as well as address, and from which he can scarcely be said to have been driven. So singular a fact was variously explained or interpreted at the time. As even his opponents neither attributed to him, want of ambition, nor any defect of firmness, it became requisite to discover and to assign other reasons for his conduct. Reports injurious to his political reputation, were industriously disseminated by his enemies; which, from the systematic hostility exhibited in their diffusion, I believe to have been without foundation. Pitt himself may, indeed, be said to have involuntarily given some weight to them, by his own line of conduct towards Lord Shelburne:—for, though scarcely ten months elapsed, before Pitt came again into power, yet he never associated that nobleman to any share of it, nor ever offered to give him a place in the cabinet, as lord president, or as lord privy seal. So pointed an exclusion of the man, who had first called him up to the councils of the sovereign, and placed him there as chancellor of the exchequer, at three and twenty, is not easily explained. It is true that Pitt pronounced, as chancellor of the exchequer, from the treasury bench, the highest encomiums on his principal, during the course of the discussions that took place relative to the peace. In his memorable speech of the 21st of February, he even alluded, as we have seen, with indignant warmth, to the “arts of defamation” which Lord Shelburne’s enemies adopted, for the purpose of degrading him in the national estimation: arts, of which Pitt professed his scorn, as well as his conviction of their falsehood. But his actions seem to have contradicted his professions.

I have however been assured that Pitt, when he was made first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, in December, 1783, *did* offer Lord Shelburne a seat in the cabinet:—a proposition which was declined by the latter, as he conceived it impossible for Pitt to maintain himself in office, against a decided majority in the House of Commons. When he had ultimately surmounted all opposition, and was become established

in power, he therefore did not esteem it necessary to reiterate the offer. Lord Shelburne, offended at his exclusion from any place in administration, complained of it to the king; adding, that “he who had first introduced Mr. Pitt into the cabinet, found himself now neglected by his former *élève*.” But his majesty replied, “My lord, I believe, Mr. Pitt was the only man who could have aided you so essentially as he did, on your being placed at the head of the treasury, after the Marquis of Rockingham’s decease.” I have reason to think that this anecdote is correct and well founded. That towards the end of 1784, Pitt advised his majesty to raise Lord Shelburne to the rank of a British marquis, must be admitted. But that title was understood to be given (like the Earldom of Lonsdale, conferred by Pitt on Sir James Lowther, earlier in the same year), as payment in full from the first minister, for all past obligations or services. Lord Shelburne, after his resignation, seemed in fact to be regarded as politically extinct, though still in the full enjoyment of all his faculties of body and mind, nor at all supposed to want ambition. The Marquis of Lansdown, as a peer of parliament, sometimes took a part in the debates of the upper house; but he never openly aspired again to become first lord of the treasury, nor even to enter the cabinet.

[1st—6th March.] Throughout the whole proceedings of the ministerial change that took place at this time, there was something personal, which attached exclusively to himself. *He* resigned, almost immediately after the second debate, of which I have spoken; but *the administration* was by no means on that account at an end. Pitt, far from following his example, remained in office more than five weeks, as chancellor of the exchequer, after the first lord of the treasury had retired; a circumstance unprecedented in our history!—Nor can there be any doubt that he might have retained his situation under the *coalition*, if he would have submitted to sit in cabinet, and to act with Lord North: but his principles were too inflexible to accommodate themselves to circumstances. Lord John Cavendish, far from forming any obstacle, would have

lent every facility to Pitt's continuance at the head of the exchequer. Fox himself, in the course of his speech on the 21st of February, expressly stated the fact. "Can my noble friend," said he, "who brings forward the present resolution, be considered as a man ambitious of power? He who has always been known rather to avoid, than to court, official employment? If he has any blemish to set off his eminent virtues, it is that of receding from those places, where his ability and integrity might render essential service to his country." Throughout the two debates in the lower house of parliament, on the peace, Lord Shelburne formed, if not the exclusive, yet the principal object of attack. Even those members who most severely reprobated the junction of Lord North and Fox, expressed the greatest indifference on the subject of the first lord of the treasury, and his tenure of power. "As to the present premier," said Sir Cecil Wray, "I know little of him, and various reasons induce me to wish him out of office; but not for having concluded the treaties on the table." Powis speaking on the same subject, on the night of the 21st, observed, that "if the removal of the first minister, constituted the principal object of the motion, he considered it as already sufficiently decided." "The division," added he, "on the former agitation of the present question, four days ago, may have given a pretty broad hint to the noble lord, that he is by no means so popular as he had imagined."

Powis's language on the 6th of March, when alluding to the state of ministerial affairs, was still more pointed. "The administration," remarked Powis, has been for some time burning in the socket, and has at last become extinct. But perhaps in one point of view, this is no national misfortune; — for when I reflect who is at the head of the ministry, I may say, it would be better to have no head at all." Widely different were his expressions relative to the chancellor of the exchequer. "In the dissolution of the present cabinet," continued he, "there is however one circumstance deeply to be regretted: I mean, the loss which the public will sustain by the retreat from office of a gentleman, whose splendid abilities may adorn any situa-

tion. It is to be hoped that he will not remain long unemployed. Great talents are public property, and therefore the public ought not to be deprived of them." An extraordinary and anomalous interval of time followed Lord Shelburne's resignation, during which the functions of government may be said to have suffered a suspension; while the king, the ministry, and the candidates for power, stood looking at each other. William the Third never displayed more steadiness or determination, at any period of his life, either when Prince of Orange, or after his elevation to the crown of England, than George the Third manifested, throughout the whole of "this interregnum," as it was denominated. Though his first minister, from whatever motives, had quitted him, he did not abandon himself, or forsake those individuals who remained faithful to him. On the contrary, he made the most desperate efforts to avoid passing under a yoke, which he considered as equally painful to himself, and pernicious to his people.

The *coalition*, having twice defeated administration in the House of Commons, and having compelled Lord Shelburne to retire, considered the business as effected, and their triumph secure. Resting, therefore, on their arms, without attempting to push their advantages farther, they waited till the king should send to the two leaders, in order to form a new ministry. But in this expectation, however natural, they greatly deceived themselves. That prince, as if conscious that Lord Shelburne constituted the principal, and the most vulnerable object of attack,—having disembarassed his councils of the weight that encumbered them, endeavoured to repair the breach, and to form a new rampart against Lord North and Fox. It might perhaps have been imagined that the presence of the former nobleman in cabinet, and the share of power which must necessarily be allotted to him and his friends, in the formation of a new government; would have tranquillised the king's mind by affording a security against the attempts or character of the latter statesman. But he knew by the experience of many years, the pliability and easiness of Lord North's nature; nor was he unacquainted with

the energy of Fox's mind, or unapprised of the efforts that he would probably make, in order to cement and to perpetuate that elevation which he had now nearly attained with so much difficulty. The king, who considered Fox as a man ruined in fortune, of an incorrect moral conduct, and surrounded with a crowd of followers resembling him in these particulars, deprecated, as the severest misfortune to himself and to his subjects, the necessity of taking such a person, however eminent for capacity, into his confidence or councils. When we consider these circumstances, we shall not wonder at the long, though ineffectual resistance made by his majesty, before he submitted to receive the law from the *coalition*.

[6th March.] Previous to Lord Shelburne's resignation, and the dissolution of his ministry, various pensions having been granted to various eminent individuals, particularly one to the chancellor, and a second to Lord Grantham, Powis brought the subject before the house. Pitt stated the circumstances attending these grants, officially, from the treasury bench; and a very animated, as well as personal discussion arose, in which Fox took a most prominent part. He was peculiarly severe on Lord Thurlow, whom he supposed to form, by his advice to the king, the principal impediment to the formation of a new administration. "I have long lived," said he, "on terms of sincere private friendship with that noble person, who unquestionably possesses great abilities: but I am, nevertheless, of opinion that they are exerted in a manner most injurious to the true interests of this country." — "We are told," continued he, "by the chancellor of the exchequer, that when Lord Grantham accepted the office of secretary for the foreign department, his majesty promised him a pension of two thousand pounds a year, whenever he should leave the office. What is this, except bribing persons by pensions to assume employments, for the acceptance of which they betray no inclination? By such expedients, the crown can always form an administration, without regarding either the approbation of parliament, or the confidence of the people." Having thus animadverted on

one secretary of state, he turned round upon the other, Mr. Townsend, who on that very day had been raised to the peerage, by the title of Lord Sydney. "No man," observed Fox, "entertains a higher esteem for him than I do, or more sincerely wishes him loaded with honours. Yet it seems a little extraordinary, that the sovereign should think proper to remunerate those ministers who have assisted in making a peace, which, the more I contemplate it, the more cause of wonder do I find, at any secretary of state having affixed his signature to such treaties." From the absent, reverting to those who were present, he next attacked Dundas, who had recently obtained the place of keeper of the signet in Scotland. After declaring that he meant nothing invidious, or personally offensive, Fox added: "All the world, nevertheless, wonders at so strange a fact, as giving a man an office for life, on condition of his taking another, the treasurership of the navy, which may be regarded as nearly a sinecure. So absurd, as well as lavish a waste of the public money, has, I believe, no precedent." Towards the conclusion of his speech, he once more fastened upon the chancellor, "whose injurious influence," Fox declared, "the kingdom felt at the present moment." Adding, "If those pernicious exertions had not been made, I fully believe an administration would have been formed some days ago, which would have united the confidence of this house, and the affection of the people."

No sooner had Fox concluded, than the lord advocate rose, and having explained the circumstances that attended his acceptance of the place of treasurer of the navy, a situation which, he candidly admitted, was not one suited to him, he subjoined, "I will not, however, say that I am unfit for the office which I have obtained in Scotland; and as his majesty has been pleased to honour me with a patent place, I do assure the right honorable gentleman, that I never will dishonour the patent, by carrying it to market." Dundas's allusion in these last words, to the sale or exchange negotiated by Fox with Mr. Charles Jenkinson, to whom he sold the clerkship of the Pells in Ireland, was

too pointed, as well as personal, to be passed over in silence. He instantly replied, that the transaction in question had in it nothing dishonorable. "I received," said he, "the patent in question from my father, as a part of my fortune, altogether unconnected with the ministry of that day, who first applied to me on the subject. I consented to accommodate government, though on very injurious conditions for myself, as I parted with a thing of considerably greater value than I received in return. This is the whole affair, and no man except the learned lord ever thought it dishonorable or disgraceful in the slightest degree." Rigby confirmed Fox's statement in the most ample manner. "I was acquainted," observed he, "with every part of the bargain, which was perfectly honorable; and in which there could be only one thing censurable, namely, that the possessor of it gave away his patent for less than its worth." George Byng added, that the place had no sooner passed out of Fox's possession, into the hands of Mr. Jenkinson, than its value became augmented to the amount of full a thousand pounds a year. Here the matter dropped: but Rigby having stated in the course of his speech that, "though he did not approve of the late coalition, yet he was ready to support any administration, whether formed on a broad or on a narrow basis, which might rescue the country from its present deplorable state;" Courtenay exposed the declaration to much derision. "I give the worthy gentleman entire credit for his assurance," said he, "and I am persuaded he is animated by no other motive except to preserve peace and unanimity; to maintain the proper equilibrium between the crown and the people; but, above all, to retain, down to the last moment possible, every *balance* in his hands."

[7th — 22d March.] During the course of the month of March, every measure was adopted on the part of the king, that promised to frustrate the hopes of the new confederates. Earl Gower, to whom the place just vacated by Lord Shelburne, was offered, manifested the utmost readiness to accept it, if the probable means of maintaining himself there, could be demonstrated. But, by what

expedient could a minority of the House of Commons, be converted by him at once into a majority? The difficulties being considered as insuperable, the experiment was therefore at length abandoned. Meanwhile the *coalition*, indignant at so long a delay, began to manifest symptoms of impatience. The House of Commons having adjourned for some days, after the debate of the 21st of February, on a motion to that purpose, made by Mr. Dundas, with the view of allowing time for a new ministerial arrangement; Lord Maitland called on the lord advocate to state the reasons, why a successor had not been appointed to the Earl of Shelburne. This fact took place on the 28th of February: but, no reply being returned to Lord Maitland's enquiry, either by the person to whom the question was addressed, or from any individual seated on the treasury bench, though Pitt himself was present, the subject proceeded no further. Things remained in this state during more than a fortnight, it being perfectly understood that his majesty was occupied in unceasing exertions, to prop or to recreate the administration. At length, on the 18th of March, Mr. Coke, member for the county of Norfolk, having given notice that if no ministry should be formed in the course of two days, he would move an address to the crown, on the subject; the king, conceiving it dangerous, as well as useless, to protract the contest, sent his commands to the Duke of Portland and Lord North, to wait upon him at St. James's. I have been assured that at the audience which took place, his majesty offered to concede every point in litigation, except one; namely, that Lord Thurlow should not be deprived of the great seal. If that nobleman, he said, were permitted to remain in office, he would allow the new ministers to dispose of all other employments at their pleasure. But, no arguments could induce the *coalition* to relax upon so essential an article. Fox equally disliked and dreaded the chancellor, whose intractability, when added to his influence over the royal mind, in a place which rendered him the director of his sovereign's conscience; exposed the new candidates for office, to perpetual danger. They in-

sisted peremptorily on putting the great seal into commission. Their proposition being as firmly rejected by his majesty, the conference terminated without any progress or beneficial result.

Just at this critical juncture died the honorable Dr. Frederick Cornwallis, archbishop of Canterbury; a man of amiable character, though not distinguished by the eminent virtues of Tillotson, or the talents of Laud. The king, who well knew that the *coalition*, or in other words, that Fox had destined that great ecclesiastical elevation, for Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph, or for Hincheliffe, bishop of Peterborough; probably, for the former of them; and who was also aware that if he wished to dispose of it, himself, he had not an hour to lose; immediately sent for Dr. Hurd, bishop of Worcester. That excellent prelate, whose piety and learning rendered him one of the ornaments, as well as pillars, of the Anglican church, having waited on his majesty, was informed by him that the see of Canterbury had become vacant; and that, as he knew no person, in his opinion, more worthy to fill the metropolitan chair, he wished the bishop to accept it. He added, that in the actual position of public affairs, when he might, every day, be compelled to take new ministers into his councils, he hoped that the bishop would interpose no unnecessary delay. But Dr. Hurd, far from desiring a dignity so much sought after, besought the king to excuse him for declining it; stating, that neither his health, nor his frame of mind were adequate to the extended duties of the metropolitan see, though equal to fulfilling the more limited functions of his own diocese. His majesty having, not without great reluctance, yielded to these reasons, then insisted that the bishop should at least name the person, whom he conceived most proper to succeed Dr. Cornwallis. Hurd, without long hesitation, mentioned Dr. Louth, bishop of London; and a messenger was instantly despatched to find him, at his house in St. James's square. The bishop arriving in a very short time, had no sooner entered the closet, than the king made him the same proposition which he had done to Hurd. Extraordinary as it may appear, he met

from that prelate with a similar refusal; and one not less sincere, as well as inflexible, than the former. In this unexpected predicament, the king addressing himself to them both, said, "My lords, I will not press either of you further: but before you leave this room, you must recommend a proper successor to the deceased archbishop; and whomsoever you shall agree to name, I will accept." The two prelates having requested to be allowed a short time for consulting together, after a few minutes deliberation, without quitting the royal presence, united in nominating Dr. John Moore, bishop of Bangor. Being sent for to St. James's, on his arrival, to his no small astonishment, he learned the reasons for which he had been summoned to court. He accepted the preferment; but the requisite forms incident to the *congé d'elire*, and other ceremonies indispensable to the election, prevented the translation from being completed before the second of the following month;—the very day on which the king having surrendered at discretion, the *coalition* actually took possession of the government.

Dr. Moore, whom we have beheld during two and twenty years, archbishop of Canterbury; and who owed his elevation to that high dignity, to the joint recommendations of Hurd and Louth; was a prelate of an irreproachable life, added to a solid understanding. But his first advance in the ecclesiastical profession, arose from one of those accidents, which (whatever Juvenal may have said to the contrary), sometimes seems to determine, no less than merit, the colour of our fate. The Duchess Dowager of Marlborough, after the late duke's decease in 1758, having occasion for a tutor to superintend the education of her youngest son, the present Lord Robert Spencer; applied to the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, requesting him to recommend a proper person to her for the purpose. I have been assured, that Mr. Moore, then a servitor of that college, of very obscure birth and connections; happening to cross the quadrangle, at the precise moment of this application; it immediately occurred to the dean's mind, that he would answer the description of the tutor demanded

by the duchess. He hesitated nevertheless for some time, whether he should make the proposition to Mr. Moore; her Grace having positively insisted on his stipulating, that whatever individual she should receive into her family, in quality of preceptor to her son, should not be admitted to have the honour of dining at her table. The offer, when made by the dean, was however accepted under that exclusion: but so rapid became Mr. Moore's progress in her personal esteem, no less than in her affection, that within a very short time she found herself unable to dine without him. Her preference assumed even so decided a character, as to leave him no room to doubt of her inclination, if he had encouraged it, notwithstanding the prodigious disparity of their respective situations in life; to have bestowed her hand on him in marriage. Instead of thus acting, as a man of narrow or selfish views would have done, his sense of honour and delicacy of sentiment, led him to communicate the advances made him by the duchess, to her son, the late duke. A conduct so highly disinterested, and principles so elevated, could not fail ultimately to meet their just reward. By the Duke of Marlborough's interest, being promoted in the church, he was in progress of time made dean of Canterbury; from which situation he soon became bishop of Bangor; passing through no other intermediate episcopal state, till he attained to the metropolitan dignity. Such an impression indeed had his merit and character produced, while he remained at Canterbury, that on his promotion to the see of Bangor, all those persons who come to take leave of him, expressed their full conviction of his returning to them again as archbishop. "We console ourselves, Mr. Dean," said they, "for losing you at present, by the confident expectation which we entertain of your speedy restoration to us." I return to the course of public affairs.

On the complete failure of the first attempt, already mentioned, which his majesty made to form a new administration, many propositions were suggested to prop and renovate the still existing ministry, however difficult such a work might justly be esteemed under the ac-

tual circumstances. Mr. Pitt, desirous to meet the king's wishes on a point which coincided with all his own objects of personal elevation and ambition, suffered himself to be persuaded to promise that he would accept the post of first lord of the treasury, in addition to the office of chancellor of the exchequer; and during twenty-four hours, he might be said to have in some measure actually held both these offices. But at the end of a short time, finding it impracticable, after a full examination, to set up any government which promised duration, or which could make head against the *coalition* in the House of Commons, he reluctantly retracted his engagement. Reduced almost to despair by so many disappointments, and unable to effect his emancipation, the king unquestionably meditated the extraordinary project of visiting his electoral dominions, and relinquishing, for a time, to the *coalition* the power of which they had forcibly possessed themselves. But on communicating his intentions to the chancellor, that minister, far from encouraging the proposition, gave it his strongest disapprobation. "There is nothing easier, sir," said he, with his characteristic severity of voice and manner, "than to go over to Hanover. It may not, however, prove so easy to return from thence to this country, when your majesty becomes tired of Germany. Recollect the precedent of James the Second, who precipitately embraced a similar expedient. Your majesty must not think for a moment of adopting so imprudent and hazardous a step. Time and patience will open a remedy to the present evils." The king, happily for himself, acquiesced in Lord Thurlow's wise and wholesome advice.

[24th March.] While these interesting scenes passed at St. James's, the House of Commons, completely in the hands of the *coalition*, proceeded, though with great apparent caution and external testimonies of respect, to press the sovereign by every constitutional means that he would put an end to the interregnum, which Fox denominated, in the strong language familiar to him, "the most insolent domination that ever disgraced a free country." Mr. Coke, after repeated delays, having moved an address

to his majesty, entreating him "to form an administration entitled to the confidence of the people;" one of the most interesting conversations, rather than debates, took place, at which I ever assisted, near four hundred persons being present. It was opened by the member for Norfolk, in mild and temperate language; but the Earl of Surrey, who seconded the motion, did not observe equal delicacy or reserve in his expressions, which, as I thought, had always a tincture in them of democracy. "I admit," said he, "that a high respect is due to the sovereign; but not less respect is due to the people. It is impossible to go on longer without a government; and therefore, exceptionable as the present motion may be, I shall support it, because I am convinced if this house does not call for an administration, the people will demand it in a manner painful to the crown, and injurious to the public interests." Various individuals having inveighed in animated terms against the *coalition*, Fox rose in order to justify the measure, and at the same time to state his opinions on the actual condition of the country. "Whatever," observed Fox, "may be his majesty's private feelings or opinions at the present moment, when all government is suspended, he never can act wrong, unless he is ill advised. It becomes, therefore, proper to declare from whom he could receive that injurious advice; and the channel through which it comes, cannot be matter of doubt. The nation has now remained near five weeks in a state without precedent, and without ostensible ministers." — "If ever there was a time that imperiously demanded the oblivion of former animosities and ancient prejudices, it is the present moment. The situation of the country renders indispensable a coalition of parties; and in order to attain an object so salutary, by composing an administration on a broad, as well as a permanent basis, *I am ready to shake hands even with the persons opposite to me, no less than with the noble lord in the blue ribband near me; thus forming out of the three parties such a government as the public may regard with confidence.*" Having denied, in the strongest terms, that the delay in composing a new ad-

ministration had arisen from any disputes between the two heads of parties recently united, he launched out into severe reflections, or more properly to speak, accusations, against the individuals who during more than a month had governed the country. "A government," continued Fox, "not conducted by avowed ministers, by a first lord of the treasury, or by secretaries of state, those instruments and puppets of other agents; but by the persons themselves who have hitherto been supposed to possess secret influence, and who now stand forward as the private advisers of his majesty to act in opposition to the wishes of his people, and to the declared sense of one house of parliament."

Even if the intention of these words could have been mistaken, Fox, by fixing his eyes on Jenkinson, who was present when he pronounced them, rendered their application obvious to every hearer. Then alluding to the chancellor, "If," continued he, "we would know who has governed the kingdom, and ill advised the sovereign, we have only to repair to the upper house. There, the great adviser may be seen in his true character. We shall there find sullenness, delay, impediments to public business of every kind, and all the features that characterise the present interregnum." Charges so invidious, as well as personal, were not suffered to remain without an immediate reply. Governor Johnstone starting up as soon as Fox had concluded; with his characteristic impetuosity of gesture and language, retorted on Fox the imputations with which he had loaded Lord Thurlow. After passing the highest encomiums on the talents, firmness, and integrity of that great law officer, whom, he said, he considered as one of the pillars of the state; he reminded Fox of the eulogiums which he had pronounced on this very nobleman, when composing a member of Lord North's administration. "Did he not then declare," exclaimed Johnstone, "that the chancellor formed the only exception to the cabinet of that period; who alone ought, from his superior endowments of mind and of character, to be continued in his high office, after the dissolution of that ministry?" With more temper, calmness, and command

of himself, Jenkinson vindicated the line of conduct which he had held under the existing circumstances. He was heard with general and profound attention. "I stand up," said he, "to refute the insinuation of being an evil adviser of his majesty, and to deny the existence of secret influence behind the throne, in the unwarrantable sense of those expressions. But the prerogative of the crown is not so limited, as to proscribe any privy counsellor from having access to the presence of, the sovereign, or to preclude him from offering his advice, if called on to deliver his opinion. If his majesty is graciously pleased to command my attendance, I am compelled in duty to obey the summons. I confess that during the last five weeks, I have been with him more than once. I never went, except on official business; nor did I ever use any secret influence. That idea is only a trap for the credulous multitude. It exists solely in imagination, and is now started merely for political purposes, to which the members of this house cannot be strangers." — I appeal to the noble lord in the blue ribband, seated near the right honorable gentleman, with whom I had the honour of serving for ten years; whether my assertion is true or false; and whether that pretended secret influence so insidiously suggested, ever had any real existence. Not only do I appeal to the noble lord, but I invoke him to declare it; and so implicit is my reliance on his innate principles of honour, that I submit to abide by his determination."

Convincing as this defence may be esteemed, and as I regard it, yet Fox by no means acquiesced in the truth or solidity of its reasoning. "I admit," said he in reply, "that in his capacity of a privy counsellor, the right honorable member is entitled to offer the king his advice. He has a right so to do: but *not to give it in secret*. There lies the rub. Let the advice be public, and in the face of the council. There can then be neither cause of suspicion, nor can it be productive of injury. As the matter stands, it assumes a widely different aspect." Lord North, when called upon by Jenkinson, could not remain silent. In the progress of a speech conceived with great ability, and tempered by the

suavity of his disposition, he endeavoured to justify his union with Fox, as being an act founded on public expediency, if not absolute necessity. "Those persons," observed he, "who reprobate the present coalition, forget that it is almost impossible to find in this assembly, any individuals now acting together, who have not differed materially on great and important points. The administration existing, — if we can be said to have any; — is so composed. And when it is considered that there are three great parties in the nation, two must unite, in order to form a coalition. All men seem to agree, that an administration ought to be constituted on as broad a basis as possible. Perhaps it is meant *a ministry composed of all the three parties*. If such be their meaning, I have not any objection to coincide with them in opinion. The divided and distracted state of the empire, demands a combination of all eminent abilities." Alluding finally to the appeal made by Mr. Jenkinson, "I am called on," added he, "by a friend, to declare whether, during my administration, I ever found any secret influence lurking behind the throne, subversive of my measures or intentions. *I will freely avow that I never did*. I have frequently, while in office, received advice from that right honorable gentleman: but I never knew that he had given any secret advice to his sovereign, which he was not ready publicly to justify, if the occasion demanded it." No declaration could be less equivocal, nor better calculated to undeceive the believers in secret influence. But the opinion, which dated from a very early period of the king's reign, had taken too deep a hold of the public mind and was sustained with too much art, to be eradicated, although by such testimonies. Even at the present day, that conviction is by no means extinct.

Pitt may be said to have terminated the discussion under our review; and never, not even on the 21st of the preceding month, when on the point of laying down his official situation, did he appear to me more an object of just admiration! Lord North and Fox having formed their political union, had, both, successively, in the course of addressing the house on that evening, offered to re-

ceive him into their coalition. It rested with *him* to have composed one of the new *triumvirate*, in which he assuredly would not have occupied the meanest place. He might have continued at the head of the exchequer under the Duke of Portland, as he had been under Lord Shelburne. The odium of the *coalition* could not have attached to *him*, who had not contributed in the most remote degree to its formation. Power, and office, and the emoluments of place, lay open to him, and seemed to solicit his acceptance; while, on the other side, he beheld the thorny path of the law, or a more sterile and unproductive attendance on parliament, as his only certain resources. From his official and splendid residence in Downing street, he must remove to Chambers in one of the inns of court. His fortune was narrow, and his ambition immeasurable. Yet, placed in a situation so trying to human nature, his elevated mind, superior to circumstances, aided by a judgment far beyond his years, enabled him to appreciate, and to reject, the glittering proposition. Perhaps he foresaw that an alliance, such as had been made between two heads of party so discordant;—an alliance equally odious to the sovereign, and to the majority of the nation;—however apparently solid might be its foundations, could prove of no duration. Probably he even anticipated, at no remote distance of time, his own future ministerial triumph over the two new allies. Yet even admitting these facts, his line of conduct does not excite less astonishment, nor detract from his pre-eminent merit.

In his reply to the offers of the two coalition chiefs, he seemed to be impelled and animated by feelings of a higher description than mere power could satisfy, unless accompanied by self-approbation, and conscious rectitude. "There are persons," said he, "who can easily reconcile to their minds, the sacrifice of old principles, and who with ease adopt new rules of conduct. However such modes of acting, may agree with tried constitutions and long habits of change, I am as yet too young to relinquish my opinions, and to conform my ideas to the tide of interest, or to the triumphs of party. I have formed one great princi-

ple which regulates my conduct, and which has taken too deep root in my bosom, to be erased even by myself. The honorable gentlemen on the opposite benches, talk of extinguishing animosities, and modifying or changing their political opinions, just as they would change their gloves. The same acts or measures which to-day they reprobate, to-morrow they applaud. Those persons, whom in the morning they hate and condemn, they esteem it honorable, conscientious, and patriotic, to take to their bosom in the evening. Such maxims are repugnant to my nature. I cannot coalesce with men, whose sentiments are diametrically opposed to my own; because, if they come over to my ways of thinking, I can place no confidence in them; and if I were to adopt their principles, I should act against my honest judgment. Parties, so constituted, can have no long continuance. There may be a seeming harmony, while their interests point the same road: but, only a similarity of ideas can render political friendships permanent."—"I therefore," continued he, "think it indispensable for me explicitly to declare, that *I cannot induce myself to adopt the mode of reasoning, by which the present grand coalition is defended or justified; and that my principles will not conform themselves to the present times.* I was a witness of the involuntary applause extorted by this lofty and disinterested declaration, which at once extinguished every hope of Pitt's uniting with the *coalition*. He preferred to reserve himself for future occasions of coming forward in public life, rather than to purchase present office, by the dereliction of those rules of action, which he had laid down for his guidance, in, and out of parliament. No reply to so hostile and decided an avowal, was made by either of the opposition chiefs: but, Mr. Coke's proposed address to the throne, being put, was carried, though not unanimously, yet without any division.

[25th—31st March.] His majesty, nevertheless, having given a vague and implicit answer to the address, by which no information was in fact conveyed relative to the appointment of new ministers, Lord Surrey agitated the subject again on the 27th; and after complaining

of the injurious consequences that resulted to the state, from a suspension of all government, concluded by a notice, or rather a menace, that, if the vacant offices were not filled up within four days, he would move for an enquiry into the cause of such delay. Lord North, on the other hand, deprecated all interference in the present state of the business, as disrespectful to the sovereign, whose gracious message claimed, he said, the gratitude of the house. The month of March meanwhile rapidly approached its termination; nor was it till the 31st, that the king, having exhausted every effort for reconstructing an administration, of which Pitt would have formed the head; finding the experiment hopeless, as well as impracticable, reluctantly accepted his resignation. Lord Surrey rising in his place on that day, just at the time when Pitt entered the house, instantly demanded of him, whether any new ministers were yet appointed, or what steps had been taken for the purpose? His reply, which informed the house that he was no longer chancellor of the exchequer, gave rise to a conversation of no common interest, and of considerable length, during which, many curious facts were communicated from various sides of the assembly. The lord advocate of Scotland, as an excuse for the long period of time which had elapsed since the resignation of the first lord of the treasury; ingenuously avowed that his majesty had fully designed to place Mr. Pitt in that office, and to form a new government under his auspices:—a determination which the king had only relinquished within two hours of the moment when he was occupied in addressing the house. A declaration so mortifying to the *coalition*, did not pass unnoticed or uncensured by Fox. After inveighing indirectly against Pitt, as the principal cause of so culpable a suspension of the functions of government; and stating that while he remained at the head of the exchequer, he must be held responsible for every measure performed in his official capacity; Fox seized the occasion offered, to renew the charge of secret influence against Mr. Jenkinson.

Sir William Dolben, when alluding to the mention which had already been made of that pretended interference, in

the course of a late debate; having observed that he should call for more than mere insinuation or assertion to convince him of its reality, Fox triumphantly appealed to Jenkinson's own admission. "The fact," exclaimed he, "at which, down to the present time, suspicion has only glanced, exultation has avowed. I have not only learned more than I antecedently knew, but more than I ever expected to have heard. I have learned that a privy counsellor, though he is not a minister, may offer his sovereign advice, and not be accountable for its effects. Surely, this house will never sanction a doctrine so replete with danger to the state. How are we to know the nature of the advice given, except by its effects? And if that right honorable gentleman has given advice to his majesty in the present instance, *he* is the culpable person. The noble lord in the blue ribband, near me, when called on by him, on a recent occasion, to declare whether he ever found any of his plans or measures frustrated by a concealed influence, answered, I allow, in the negative. But it must be remembered that the individual in question was a friend and supporter of that administration. What would the consequence be, if a ministry, whose views and principles were opposed to his, should find their objects subverted, and all their projects overturned, by a person not in any way responsible for his advice? How could they act in such a case? A virtuous administration would have no other alternative than to signify their disapprobation of the interference, by the resignation of their employments." I confess that these observations have always appeared to me to grow out of the British Constitution, which demands, as a primary principle, responsibility. Pitt offered no reply to that part of Fox's speech; but he reiterated in the most decisive terms, his fixed determination to hold himself wholly unconnected with any political description of men. "I will abide," said he, "by the declaration which I made on a former occasion. I will take no active part, either for or against any party; but shall be wholly guided in my conduct by the measures pursued. It will not be without the utmost reluctance that I shall oppose any administration

whatever ; nor will I do it, unless impelled by a strong conviction of their acting injuriously to the public interests." Having stated that he held himself responsible for every act performed by him as chancellor of the exchequer, down to the moment of his resignation ; he concluded by deprecating Lord Surrey's motion as precipitate, and recommending that it should be withdrawn without a division.

Lord North was by no means silent during this interesting debate, the last which took place on the state of public affairs, in the lower house of parliament, previous to the *coalition* assuming possession of the government. With equal eloquence and ability he endeavoured to show that the arguments urged against a junction of parties, on the ground of antecedent differences of opinion, were futile, and incapable of being maintained by men of candour, or of enlarged minds. He must, nevertheless, have felt how much more dignified and elevated was his position, while holding the balance, as he might in some measure be said to do, between Pitt and Fox, than when merged in the vortex of the latter luminary. Of the loss that he sustained in public opinion by joining the Rockingham party, he received many painful intimations. Governor Johnstone observed during the debate of the 24th of March, that "the noble lord in the blue ribband, till within the last few weeks, enjoyed as much of the national confidence, as any individual in the kingdom. His character, as it became more generally understood, acquired daily more respect and strength ; but," added Johnstone, "*the present coalition has unquestionably shaken him in the estimation of many of his friends.*" Sir William Dolben, of whose cordial support Lord North must have felt the deepest sense, as it was given him during the most critical period of his administration, expressed himself on the evening of the 31st of March, in equally intelligible language. After *catechising*, if I may use the term, Lord North, respecting the conditions which, it was commonly supposed, the new allies attempted to dictate to the king, before they would take office ; and hearing that nobleman's indignant denial of the imputed facts ;—

Sir William, while he manifested his dissatisfaction at the bare idea of invading the constitutional prerogative of the sovereign, added : "The independent country gentlemen, who have uniformly supported the noble lord in the blue ribband, have done it from approbation of his principles, not from his political power or influence. If, therefore, he expects a continuance of their support, after his junction with the party which so long opposed him, *he must act in a manner consistent with his former character and professions.*"

Fox, aided by Burke, exerted all his powers of persuasion in proving to the house the insuperable necessity of his coalescing with Lord North. Endeavouring to enforce a doctrine so indispensable for his own justification, he observed : "The principal cause of our dispute, has been done away by the termination of the American war. On various other points we still differ ; but we are not more at variance than the present chancellor, and the master-general of the ordnance ; or than the secretary of state for the southern, and the secretary for the northern department ; or than the right honorable gentleman opposite me (Pitt), and the learned lord, his friend (Dundas), seated near him, have differed in sentiment upon great constitutional points. This country can only flourish, her glory can only be maintained, or her commerce be preserved, by unanimity within these walls." However just or solid such principles may be in themselves, their application in the persons of Lord North and Fox, did not obtain general approbation. Even among those who supported, many disapproved or condemned their union. An oblivion of all past recriminations, though it might be dictated by ambition, and vindicated by policy, yet seemed to imply a mutual sacrifice of principle. Both the heads of party lost much of their popularity ; and their possession of power, neither reposing on royal favour, nor on the approbation of the people, proved to be without any deep foundation. These reflections were, however, obliterated by present success. Lord Surrey, having been induced to withdraw his motion, on the presumption that a ministry

would be formed in the course of a very few days, the house adjourned. Nor were those expectations frustrated : for, within forty-eight hours afterwards, his majesty, finding it vain to protract his resistance, and impossible to set up any administration with a chance of success, surrendered at discretion, by sending a second time for the Duke of Portland.

[2d April.] If we consider, by the abstract principles of the British Constitution, as recognized at the revolution of 1688, which compels the sovereign to listen to the voice of the majority of the House of Commons ; the conduct of George the Third, in resisting for near six weeks their votes and their addresses ; if we reflect, moreover, that the consequence of his pertinacity, produced a suspension of many of the essential and vital functions of the executive government ; at a moment, too, when the exertions of a vigorous administration were peculiarly demanded, in order to reduce various of the military and naval establishments to the standard of peace ; if we try his actions by these criterions, we may be tempted to accuse him of sacrificing national objects to the gratification of his private resentments or prejudices. But speculation and practice often lead to such opposite conclusions, that it becomes unsafe to reason always from the former, however solid may appear the foundations. It is certain, that though the country anxiously desired to see an efficient government established, and deeply lamented the want of it for so long a time, yet the king by no means suffered in the estimation of his people at large, on account of the desperate contest he had maintained against the *coalition*.

The nation in general regarded the union formed between Lord North and Fox, as a mutual sacrifice of moral and political principle, to ambition, or rather to the love of office. In vain did those leaders endeavour to justify it, by recurring to past periods of our history, in particular, to the year 1757, when similar coalitions were known to have been made between contending factions. The interval of eleven months, which had scarcely elapsed since Fox and Burke were accustomed, day by day, to denounce their new ally, as the most in-

capable, subservient, and criminal of ministers, appeared too short ; and the transition from enmity to friendship, seemed too sudden, to admit of being easily or satisfactorily explained to vulgar comprehension. His majesty's principles, however mistaken they might be, were admitted to be upright, and intentionally directed always to the felicity of his subjects. America, which had so long formed the object of contest, being lost ; with the termination of the war, terminated likewise the king's unpopularity, which had principally originated from that source : — while on the other hand, Fox, who during several years had stood so high in the estimation of the people, as a patriot ; now in his turn attracted severe observations on his recent junction with a minister, the author, as he asserted, of all the misfortunes which he had eloquently depicted, and which were still deplored throughout the country. These sentiments and opinions, which began already to operate, and which only required time to mature, protected the king against any effects of popular disapprobation. But they could not prevent, or longer protract his surrender to the combined leaders, who now compelled him to receive them into his counsels, without further delay.

In the audience that he gave the Duke of Portland, for the purpose of forming a new administration, he did not affect to conceal, or even to disguise, the painful emotions by which he was agitated on the occasion. He observed to that nobleman, that the ministerial arrangement to which he now submitted, being altogether compulsory, the new ministers might dispose of the cabinet places, and other offices, as they should think proper : that he would not oppose, or refuse his signature, to any act presented to him officially for his sanction ; but that the responsibility of advising such measures must wholly rest with them. And he added, that he would not create any new British peers at their recommendation ; a circumstance of which he gave them distinct, and early notification. The *coalition* having acquiesced, at least tacitly, in these avowed principles of the king's conduct, took possession of the govern-

ment; the Duke of Portland being placed at the head of the treasury; and Lord John Cavendish a second time becoming chancellor of the exchequer. Fox returned to the foreign office, as was naturally to be expected; leaving to Lord North the secretaryship of state for the home department. Lord Keppel, who, disapproving of the conditions of the late peace, had resigned the post of first lord of the admiralty, immediately after its conclusion, in which high employment he had been replaced by Lord Howe; was reinstated in his ancient functions: while Lord Stormont became president of the council. I have been assured that the nobleman last mentioned, did not accept that situation, till he had clearly understood, as he conceived, the king's pleasure, upon the subject; who not only approved, but wished him to take the office, as it would exclude an enemy from occupying so important a place. Yet it is difficult to reconcile this asserted permission and approbation, with the resentment that his majesty is known to have subsequently expressed, at Lord Stormont's thus actively joining the *coalition*. The privy seal was lastly given to the Earl of Carlisle.

By this new ministerial arrangement, the cabinet, which, under Lord North had consisted of *nine* individuals; and which under the two succeeding administrations, was augmented to *eleven*; became reduced to *seven* persons. At first inspection, there seemed however to be something like an equal distribution of power, between the two leaders and parties who had recently coalesced; the Rockingham party reckoning *four*, and their new allies counting *three* votes. But on closer examination, the fallacy became palpable, and it was evident that Fox in reality possessed the whole authority of government. Not only he commanded a numerical majority: he likewise held the treasury under his complete influence. Nor was this the single circumstance, that gave him a preponderating weight in every measure or deliberation. The energy and activity of his talents, when contrasted with the flexibility and indolence of Lord North, doubled his personal, as well as political consequence. His

three friends in the cabinet, were moreover incapable, if they had even been desirous of setting limits to his ambition, or of restraining his ascendancy. To Fox, the Duke of Portland might indeed be said to owe his elevation to the post of first lord of the treasury; an eminence, to which his own very moderate abilities, though sustained by his high rank, could not of themselves have conducted him. In like manner, Lord Keppel stood indebted for both his place and his peerage, principally to Fox. Lord John Cavendish, from his great hereditary connections, and recognised integrity of character, might be esteemed, it is true, an honour and an ornament to any ministry: but though independent in mind and in fortune, yet he appeared to be not the less under Fox's intellectual dominion, who on all occasions propelled and guided him, in and out of parliament. Lord North, on the contrary, by no means possessed or exerted, the same influence over his two cabinet adherents, as Fox maintained among his coadjutors; Lord Stormont in particular, might be considered as wholly independent of Lord North's control. Nor did the offices of president of the council, and of privy seal, in themselves confer the same active rights of ministerial interference, as did the treasury, the exchequer, and the admiralty; all which departments lay in Fox's partition of employments. These circumstances are not unessential, when we speculate on the state of public affairs under the *Duümviros*; and may partly explain the causes, from which arose some of the most affirmative measures, subsequently adopted by the *coalition*.

If Fox, however, took effectual care to secure the real power of the state in his own hands, he in return allowed Lord North to bestow many of the great ostensible situations about the court, among his immediate friends. The Earl of Dartmouth, instead of privy seal, the cabinet office that he had formerly held, was made lord steward: while the Earl of Hertford appeared again in the drawing room, reinvested with his white wand of lord chamberlain. Lord Townsend, restored to his ancient employment, replaced the Duke of Richmond

at the head of the ordinance. He was a nobleman of very considerable ability, but of great eccentricity of manners and character, which seemed sometimes to approach almost to alienation of mind. Cheerful in his disposition, void of all pride or affectation, communicative, affable, convivial, facetious, and endowed with uncommon powers of conversation, he was formed to acquire popularity. He eminently possessed the dangerous talent of drawing caricatures; a faculty which he did not always restrain within the limits of severe prudence, though he no more spared himself, than he did others. It is well known that he drew his own portrait, habited in the state dress of lord lieutenant, having his hands tied behind him, in order to show how destitute he was of political power, or of the means of conferring favours. This allegorical picture, I have been assured, was hung up in a private cabinet of the castle at Dublin; and when solicited to bestow offices or rewards, over which he had no control, he used to conduct the importunate suitor into the room; at the same time asking him if he recognised the likeness, and understood the application. In Ireland, while administering the affairs of that kingdom during five years, he gave general satisfaction; and I remember Courtenay eulogizing him in the House of Commons, in the language which Horace uses to Augustus.

“Longas, o utinam, dux bone, ferias
Præstes *Hiberniæ*: dicimus integro
Sicci manè die, dicimus uvidi,
Quum Sol Oceano subest.”

Indeed, not one of the viceroys sent over to Dublin in the course of twelve years, between 1772 and 1784, could compete with Lord Townsend in the affection of the Irish. Lord Harcourt was too grave and measured in his manners; the Earl of Buckinghamshire had too cold, stiff, and lofty a deportment; Lord Carlisle was too fine a gentleman, and too highly bred; the Duke of Portland and Earl Temple both, either from disinclination, or from physical inability, observed too rigorously the virtues of temperance and abstemiousness; virtues by no means congenial to the soil:—lastly, Lord Northington was too infirm

in his health, to acquire general attachment in a country, where no qualities, however eminent or meritorious, could recommend to national approbation, unless accompanied by personal sacrifices and exertions of various kinds. The Duke of Rutland, whom Pitt sent over to the sister kingdom, early in 1784; by the magnificence of his establishment, the conviviality of his temper, and the excesses of his table; in all which particulars he resembled his father, the Marquis of Granby;—obliterated or superseded Lord Townsend in their regard: but he paid for the triumph with his life, falling a victim in the vigour of his age, within four years, to his irregularities.

Mr. Charles Townsend, commonly called “Spanish Charles,” from the circumstance of his having formerly acted as secretary to the English embassy at Madrid; and whom Pitt created with nine other individuals, a peer, in 1797, by the title of Lord Bayning; was made treasurer of the navy. Wallace, though labouring under ill health, became once more attorney general. Lord Sandwich, whose wants made office essential to him;—instead of presiding over the admiralty, and directing that great department of state, dwindled into ranger of the two parks: but, as some compensation for this official degradation, his son, Lord Hinchinbrook, a nobleman deservedly acceptable to his majesty, as well as one of the most honest, loyal, frank, and friendly men in the kingdom,—for I had the honour to enjoy his friendship;—was made master of the buck hounds. If he fell much below his father, in ability, application, and talents for public business, he possessed greater private virtues. Sir Grey Cooper, who had been one of the joint secretaries of the treasury, obtained a seat at the board. Not that Fox appeared by any means oblivious of his friends; a fault which never could be imputed to him. Burke went back with great alacrity, to the pay office; as did his brother, Richard Burke, to the joint secretaryship of the treasury. Mr. Frederick Montagu resumed his place at that board: while the Earl of Surrey, whose recent services and prominent merit in parliament (where he never shrunk from any exertion, however rough or personal), could not be passed

over without remuneration, filled the remaining vacancy. Considerably more than two centuries had elapsed, since the gallant and distinguished earl of that name, so well known under Henry the Eighth, the last who bore the title, had occupied a situation in the councils of the crown.

Colonel Fitzpatrick was made secretary at war: and though his talents always appeared to me, to be of a description more elegant than solid; more adapted to entertain and delight, than fitted for the desk, or for the cabinet; yet I have been assured, even by those who were not partial to him among his own profession, that he gave great, as well as general satisfaction, while he held that employment. His person, tall, manly, and extremely distinguished; set off by his manners, which, though lofty and assuming, were nevertheless elegant and prepossessing;—these endowments added grace to the attractions of his conversation. No man's society was more eagerly courted among the highest orders, by persons of both sexes. He possessed no mean poetic talents, peculiarly for compositions of wit, fancy, and satire, in all which he far exceeded Fox. The marriage of his sister with Stephen, Lord Holland, cemented their intimacy. They had been brought up together from early life, remained inseparable to the last, and were strongly attached to each other. Fitzpatrick, like his friend, was a constant votary of Brookes's Club, and became during many years, a victim to play; but he possessed one advantage over Fox, namely, the support arising from a profession. As a member of the House of Commons, he obtained no distinction for eloquence; though he never betrayed, when addressing parliament, any want of ideas, language, or ability. Under Charles the Second, he would have been more in his element and in his place, than under such a prince as George the Third; of whose court, he must nevertheless always be considered to have formed a constellation and an ornament. In the "*Memoires de Grammont*" he would assuredly have filled a very distinguished niche. I witnessed the spectacle of his surviving many of the personal and intellectual graces, which nature had conferred on

him with so lavish a hand. During the last months of his life, weakened by the progress of diseases which enfeebled his frame, though perhaps without impairing his powers of understanding; it might be in some degree said of Fitzpatrick, as the King of Prussia observes of Prince Eugene in the trenches before Philipsburgh in 1734, "*Ce n'étoit plus que l'Ombre du grand Eugene.*"

Sheridan became the other secretary of the treasury, and Lee was replaced in his former situation of solicitor general. For the lord lieutenancy of Ireland, the Earl of Northington was selected by Fox. His person, unwieldy, vacillating, and destitute of grace, seemed to disqualify him for any active exertions of body; nor were his faculties brilliant: but I have always heard that he gave great satisfaction, and was as much beloved, as his infirmities permitted, during the period of his short residence in that kingdom. The embassy to Paris, Fox destined for the Duke of Manchester. His figure, which was noble; his manners, affable and corresponding with his high rank, prepossessed in his favour: but his fortune bore no proportion to his dignity. Though a man of very dissipated habits, and unaccustomed to diplomatic business, he did not want talents. Such were the leading arrangements made by the "coalition," on their coming into power. The great seal, which no expostulations on the part of the king, could induce them to leave in Thurlow's hands, and which Wedderburn wisely declined accepting under the circumstances of the time, was put into commission; Lord Loughborough being placed at its head. He constituted a valuable acquisition to the new ministry in the House of Peers.

Lord North, it must be reluctantly confessed, however circumstances may justify his union with Fox, on principles of policy, of personal safety, or of necessity, did not perform in this great drama, the most dignified part. After having occupied the post of first minister, at the head of both the treasury and the exchequer, for twelve sessions; it seemed to ordinary observers no little degradation, at more than fifty years of age, to accept the secretaryship of state for the home department; and to take his seat as such, on the treasury bench,

where he had so long presided, now squeezed between Fox and Burke. I own, that I never contemplated him in that situation, without reflections allied to pity. It is true that we have since seen, and still actually behold, an ex-first minister placed in the same department, after having presided at the helm during more than three years. But it would be invidious, and it is unnecessary, to draw any comparison between the two individuals. Neither their descent, the period of their respective administrations, nor even, according to my estimate, their abilities, can be considered as having any similarity, and still less, any parity. Mr. Addington was, moreover, removed from the immediate scene of his fall in 1804, and translated to the upper house of parliament: while Lord North, remaining a commoner, with the insignia of the *Garter* across his breast, exhibited a spectacle of ministerial greatness in eclipse, like Wolsey, or like Clarendon, or like Bolingbroke. Even the compliments and the caresses of his late bitter opponents, now become his coadjutors, always appeared to me only to sink him in the estimation of the house. But he seemed, himself, to be wholly exempt from, or superior to, any painful emotions at the political change that he had undergone. The same cheerful complacency, ready wit, and unaffected good humour, always characterised him under every circumstance. Sometimes he even jested on his own descent from the highest situation to a subordinate place in government. The apartments constituting the secretary of state's office at the treasury, being situated on the second floor, he experienced some fatigue in ascending so many steps; and I recollect his once complaining, when out of breath, of the length of the staircase. Frequently, from the effect of long habit, or from absence of mind, forgetting the change in his official situation, he went straight to the treasury chambers on the first floor. Such was the oblivious felicity and equality of his temper, that these accidents, which would have distressed more irritable men, never externally decomposed him. His eldest son, Colonel North, who had so actively exerted himself to effect the *coalition*, was made

one of the two under secretaries in his father's office.

[3d — 15th of April.] It is unquestionable that there existed a desire, if not a decided intention, on the part of the new administration, about this period, of calling up Lord North to the House of Peers. The Duke of Richmond, when speaking in the house, on the eighth day of April, said, "Rumours prevailed that the assembly which he addressed was speedily to receive an honorable increase, by the introduction among them of the recently appointed secretary for the home department." Far from denying, the Duke of Portland, then first lord of the treasury, avowed the fact. "As to the question put," answered he, "it is true that the secretary of state just named, is to be called up to a seat among us; but *when that event may take place, it is not in my power to say, for reasons which must be obvious to every person who hears me.*" Allusion, and even mention of the circumstance, was repeatedly made by members of the House of Commons, without receiving any contradiction. Pitt questioned Lord North on the subject, only about a fortnight after this time. Apprehensive of that nobleman's opposition to his projected motion for a parliamentary reform, Mr. Pitt observed, while speaking in his place, that "report asserted, the noble lord in the blue ribband only remained a member of the lower house, for the purpose of opposing his proposition." Lord North replied, "that to spread such a report of his remaining in that assembly for any particular design or object, was in itself very indecent." — "It becomes not me to assert," added he, "when, or whether I may ever be called up to the other house, and honoured with a seat in it. *Both the power and the will reside in others.* But whether my stay here may be of longer, or of shorter duration, I will always perform my duty, and give my opinion freely upon every subject that may come before me." He could not more clearly admit the truth of the supposition, though various reasons or impediments probably prevented its accomplishment. The king having expressly informed the ministers, when they came into office, that he would not

create any British peer at their recommendation or request; it was not likely that he would violate his resolution, in order to elevate Lord North to that dignity; against whom, as may be supposed, he felt highly offended, or rather indignant, for his union with Fox. Lord North himself, however well he supported appearances to the world, yet probably would not have disliked, after the recent events, to have quitted a scene such as the House of Commons, where he made an inglorious figure, and where recollections very humiliating must continually intrude on his mind. Fox, on the other hand, could not possibly be averse to such a removal, as he wanted no coadjutor to aid him on the treasury bench; while Lord North's retreat would have left him sole minister, as well as manager, of the lower house of parliament. But for that very reason, Lord North ought to have felt himself in some measure compelled to remain a commoner. His party, already shaken and diminished, he well knew, would have soon crumbled away, when they no longer beheld, nor could have had daily access to their leader. Neither would he have attracted the same consideration in the other house, as he excited in his actual situation. Pressed between the amity of Fox, and the hostility of Pitt, with the loss of America about his neck, he saw himself obliged, after having so long performed the first figure, to become only the third personage in the state.

The public business of every kind, which had been nearly eight weeks delayed by the extraordinary occurrences that we have contemplated, at length began in parliament. For the third time within the space of about twelve months, the treasury bench exhibited a complete change. Many persons came down on the ninth of April, to witness the extraordinary spectacle of Lord North and Fox taking their places, side by side, as joint secretaries of state:—a metamorphosis, or more properly to speak, a transition, to be ranked among the most wonderful which the eighteenth century displayed in political life! The new chancellor of the exchequer opened his financial administration, a few days later with a loan;

the conditions of which, if not as beneficial or advantageous to the country, as might have been wished, were nevertheless, he said, as good as could be procured under the circumstances of urgency and retardment in which the culpable obstinacy of the late ministers had involved every department. Mr. Pitt, who had now taken his place on the opposition bench, and who from this time, notwithstanding his youth, was justly considered as the head of that party in the House of Commons; opposed and censured the terms of Lord John Cavendish's loan; but without venturing to divide the house upon it, as the *coalition*, he was aware, would have much outnumbered him. Governor Johnstone expressed himself likewise with great severity, on the subject of the bargain; qualifying nevertheless his condemnation, with compliments to Lord John's recognised integrity and purity of intention. Fox admitted it to be a disadvantageous loan for the public; but added, that he heard with some astonishment, the censures passed on it by Mr. Pitt, he being the principal cause that the terms were bad, by his delay in quitting office. "With respect to a competition," continued he, "which the right honorable gentleman has recommended, as a preferable mode, none such could be obtained on the present occasion; the bankers having connected themselves so strongly, and acted so much in *concert*, that it became impossible to surmount the impediments raised by them." Pitt in reply, treated the reasons alleged by the secretary of state, with derision; adding, that "perhaps, a term which had lately become celebrated, a *coalition* of bankers, might better express his meaning, than the word *concert*." Nor did Pitt limit his sarcasms to political allusion:—for, Fox having, in order to justify the principle on which the twelve millions had been borrowed, adverted to the doctrine of chances: Pitt replied, that "the reasoning adopted, was only becoming a *gambler* and a *gamester*, who takes up money desperately, without intending ever to repay the principal." The secretary retorted with asperity, vindicated himself from the imputation thrown on him, and by

very solid arguments supported the transaction. Lord North, who was present, took merely a subordinate part in the debate, leaving the burthen to be supported by Fox. Pitt's moral superiority to his ministerial antagonists, as resulting from character, was strongly manifested throughout the whole discussion.

[25th of April.] Lord John's loan having borne a premium of eight per cent. within a week after its negotiation, the subject was again agitated in parliament with augmented violence, Fox still taking on himself the principal defence of the measure. As he persisted to render the late ministers responsible for the terms, on account of the hurry in which it was unavoidably concluded, Pitt called on him to desist from using such language; or, if he continued it, to come forward with a charge against himself, and not to make it by insinuation, but in direct words. Lord North vainly endeavoured to moderate these mutual recriminations, and to infuse some good humour into the discussion. Pitt was not to be mollified by wit, or conciliated by advances. "The secretary of state," said he, "not content with attempting to justify the loan, accuses me of neglecting to borrow while I was chancellor of the exchequer, when the three per cents were up at 70. Has he forgotten the menaces which were thrown out against the late administration, if they attempted to negotiate any measure of finance? Was not this house urged to watch us narrowly, in order that no loan might be set on foot; not even the Mutiny Bill passed, so necessary for controlling the army; nor any act which could appear like the operation of permanent ministers, *because a coalition had been just formed to seize upon the government?*" Such an expression was not of a nature to be passed over by the secretary in silence. "I insist," answered he, "that it is a rash and unjustifiable assertion. The late cabinet was driven from office, as, I trust, every cabinet will be, the members of which act wrong, by a majority of this house. By the same constitutional means, the ministry of the noble lord near me, was removed; a measure in which the right honorable

gentleman fully concurred. Does he now mean to deny that the House of Commons possesses any right of interference in the government of the country? If he does, the indecent expression which he has just used, may be consistent with such principles. But if he has not forgotten or abandoned his original ideas and opinions, I hope he will forbear from applying such appellations to the line of conduct, which, twelve months ago, he himself approved." Far, however, from disavowing, or in any degree retracting the obnoxious words, Pitt not only repeated them, but declared that he meant to use them on all future occasions, as being the only appropriate expressions when alluding to the manner in which the *coalition* had obtained possession of power. "I confess at the same time," added he, "that had they ever been applied to the conduct which drove from employment the noble lord in the blue ribband, I should have expressed my indignation at it; but I never can consent to regard two things so dissimilar, in the same point of view." If public opinion, independent of parliament, could have raised any man to office, Pitt would unquestionably have been elevated in April, 1783, to the situation which he attained eight months later, in December of the same year. But the *coalition* for the present remained masters of the government, and compelled him to confine his opposition to verbal remonstrances. He knew his party to be too weak for hazarding a division, which could only have exposed the paucity of his numbers.

[7th May.] Nor did Pitt prove more successful in an attempt which he soon afterwards renewed, to effect a parliamentary reform, than he had been in the former session. He pronounced, indeed, a most eloquent address upon the subject, and was supported in his motion by Fox. Two proselytes, likewise, Mr. Thomas Pitt and Mr. Dundas, having read, each, their political recantation, adopted his principles for rendering the representation more extended, as well as more pure and incorrupt. But the house remained deaf to all these arguments, though illustrated by examples; the latter of which did not even

appear to have obtained for those who exhibited them, the praise either of disinterestedness or of sincerity. Fox and Sheridan, while they sustained Pitt's proposition, yet treated with contempt and derision the pretended sacrifice of the borough of Old Sarum, which Mr. Thomas Pitt affected to offer up at the shrine of the British Constitution, as a victim to its renovated purity. If we reflect on the close degree of consanguinity that existed between William and Thomas Pitt, who were cousins-german, — a relationship strengthened by personal friendship, — and if we likewise recollect that Thomas represented the elder branch of the family, we may perhaps incline to think that he relied on being speedily raised to the peerage for this mark of devotion, as effectively took place scarcely eight months afterwards. Dundas, who had a long and a keen political sight, having already determined on attaching his future political fortune to Pitt, probably thought a speculative political tenet to be undeserving of contention. But the recantation pronounced by both, rather tended to throw a ridicule on the proposition, than to recommend it to the house. Lord North made ample amends for his passive inactivity during the preceding session, when a similar discussion had taken place. He spoke with uncommon ability, wit, and force of argument, against all representative innovation. Powis, who rarely coincided with him on any point, joined him on this occasion.

It has always appeared to me, that Pitt's proposition for a parliamentary reform in 1783, was liable to less exception than his motion of the preceding year. The latter, which he made in May, 1782, opened wide the door of innovation, as it proposed "a committee to be appointed, for enquiring into the state of the national representation in parliament;" whereas on the present occasion, he named his specific remedies for the alleged evil. Among them, the principal cure for court influence and corruption, was "an addition of knights of the shire, and of representatives of the metropolis." We must own, that as far as theory may be trusted, of all the experiments which could be tried on the Bri-

tish Constitution, this seems to promise the fairest for success, or in all cases to be productive of the least injury. It was compared perhaps with propriety, to the infusion of new blood into the animal body. Pitt left the deliberative wisdom of parliament to determine *how many* county members should be added; but he gave it as his own opinion, that they ought not to be under *one hundred*. Powis, who spoke very early in the debate, admitted that among all the measures devised for ameliorating the composition of the lower house of parliament, the present was open to least objection; but he did not on that account allow it to be proper for adoption. With great ability and effect he called on the clerks to produce, and to read over, as most essential when such a subject was under discussion; the petitions for a more equal or extended representation, from the populous towns of Birmingham, Manchester, and Sheffield. After a careful examination, the clerks informed him, that not one of those three great manufacturing places had sent any petition to parliament. "What! Not to be found in the list!" exclaimed Powis. "How negligent! How oblivious of their duty to the state, and to themselves! Do they then regard themselves as outcasts from the Constitution! How can they so forget to demand a boon which would restore them to employment, to trade, and to happiness!" The house felt the full force of this ingenious sarcasm.

Mr. Thomas Pitt, though he exposed himself to much severe comment, not unaccompanied with ridicule, for his tergiversation in supporting the present motion, when in the preceding session he had opposed a proposition of a similar nature; yet alleged some very plausible reasons for his versatility. He was indeed a very plausible speaker, and had a seductive species of eloquence which characterized him. Nor did he, though he coincided with his relation and friend, by any means disgrace himself in the manner of doing it. On the contrary, while he surrendered to the *principle*, he opposed and resisted the *application*. To the *augmentation* of the county members he assented; but, not to the *number*, below which the mover had declared they ought not to fall. Mr.

Thomas Pitt protested against the introduction of so large a body of new men, who would far exceed, he said, the limits dictated by prudence and caution. "If no other person will do it," added he, "I will offer an amendment, by inserting the words, *an augmentation of one member to each county in England and Wales*; and I am determined to take the sense of the house upon it." There was nothing servile or dependent in this conduct. Having expressed in language of energy and animation, his respect for a well balanced, limited, and mitigated monarchy, such as ours ought ever to be; he drew with the pencil of a master, the two extreme cases; one, of a minister who should throw all power into the scale of the crown; contrasted with the other, who avowed his intention of making the balance preponderate in favour of the people. It was not possible to mistake, that by the former portrait, he meant to designate Lord North; by the latter, Fox. Both were highly coloured, yet not destitute of truth. When he had depicted the calamities resulting from a bad administration, supporting itself by corruption, in defiance of public opinion, of the independent part of parliament, and of the nation; which government he denominated "the more absolute, as wearing the mask of liberty;" he held up to view, the opposite extreme. "If," observed he, "on the other hand, in a Constitution poised like our own, *the force of cabal and faction could at any time seize on the executive authority, equally against the sense of the sovereign, and of the people;—if the titular monarch should be so disarmed and pinioned, as to be allowed no choice in the nomination of his ministers; no opinion as to the measures pursued; no free will as to granting or withholding the favours and graces of the crown;—in a word, if nothing should remain to the monarch, except the mortifying pre-eminence of sustaining daily insults on the throne;—I should not hesitate to denominate such a government, a republic; and a republic of the worst description.*"

Neither of the two secretaries of state could pass over without notice, allusions at once so severe and so personal. Lord North contrived, with uncommon felicity

of argument and expression, to blend his own defence, with the opposition which he made to the motion. Rarely have I witnessed, even from *him*, a display of greater talent, pleasantry, and sound reasoning. Borrowing part of his artillery from Shakspeare, he played, in a manner peculiarly entertaining, upon the *hundred knights* proposed by Pitt, to be added to the county members. "I say, however, as I trust the majority will say, this night," continued he, "No! not fifty. What! not fifty! No! not one."—"The American war is held up to our view, as if it had been the war of the crown, in contradiction to the wishes of the people. I deny the fact. It was the war of parliament, sanctioned throughout its whole progress, by both houses. It was more. It was the war of the people, undertaken for the purpose of maintaining their rights over the dependencies of the empire. It was, in its commencement, a popular war. Could the pretended influence of the crown have not only procured majorities approaching nearly to unanimity, within these walls; but almost unanimous approbation without doors?—True it is, that ill success rendering it at length unpopular, the people began to cry out for peace. Had the Constitution been so corrupt, or so disordered, as these reformers assert; how comes it that the voice of the people and of this house, has so recently prevailed against the power and influence of the crown?"

After having demonstrated that the petitions from various counties of the kingdom, laid upon the table, had been surreptitiously obtained, or were signed only by a minority of the inhabitants and freeholders; he entreated the indulgence of the house, while he said a few words personal to himself. Never did I witness a more enthusiastic or more universal encouragement than he received, to induce him to proceed! "Well, sir," said he, addressing the chair, "the fact to which I allude, is the accusation respecting bad ministers being continued in office, by the over-ruling influence of the crown, against the wishes of the people. This is not a random stroke. Its direction may be discovered, by the quarter from which it comes; and I will not affect to think

that it can be levelled against any other person than myself. But the attack is altogether unjust. I was not a minister of chance, picked up by the sovereign, and unknown to parliament. It was here I first became known. In my rise I was the creature of parliament. When I fell, I was its victim. You raised me up. You pulled me down. Does my administration show the undue influence of the crown? No! Sir, the history of my political life forms a proof, which will overturn a thousand wild assertions, that there is a corrupt influence in the crown, which destroys the independence of this assembly. Where then is the necessity for this paraded reformation?" "The addition of a hundred, or even of fifty county members, would give to the landed interest, a decided superiority over the monied and the commercial. But let us not begin to invade the fabric of the British Constitution, which preserves the due equipoise between the several great interests of the empire! *Principiis obsta*. Let us act as the representatives, not as the deputies, of the people. We are not to refer to *them*, before we determine. We are to use our own discretion, seeking no other guidance. In a word, let us reject those specious, but dangerous measures, which, if once adopted, will inevitably lead to subversion!" We are at a loss whether most to admire the principles, the eloquence, or the reasoning of this admirable address, which would of itself suffice to place Lord North in the first rank of wise, enlightened, and patriotic statesmen.

Fox displayed on that night, his usual ability; but he found himself painfully situated; hampered by his declarations when out of office; compelled to vote against his colleague, and to support Pitt, whom he apprehended as his most formidable adversary. He took however a sort of revenge, by holding up Mr. Thomas Pitt to ridicule. Probably, if he could have relied on continuing in office, he would have been inclined to imitate the two examples set him by Thomas Pitt and by Dundas. And as they had abandoned in some degree their preceding opinions and declarations, in order to cement their connexion with the mover of the proposition; so the new

secretary might have manifested some symptom of a more favourable disposition towards the crown, and less ardour for popular rights, than he had hitherto exhibited in parliament. But Fox well knew on what loose foundations his power reposed. He felt the strong alienation by which the king was animated towards him and his associates in office; and he therefore did not venture on any step, which might compromise him with his Westminster constituents, or expose him to the imputation of inconsistency and apostacy. Throughout the whole period of Fox's ministerial career, while a member of the *coalition*, he seems never to have forgotten that he held his situation, not by the choice of the sovereign, but in contradiction to his will. He was in fact a tribune, arrayed in consular robes, who always beheld before him the Palace Yard convocations, and considered himself as a representative of the people, rather than a minister of George the Third. Pitt, on the contrary, even while seated on the opposition bench, appeared to anticipate his speedy return to power as certain, and only to wait for the occasion presenting itself, to resume his former functions.

Two individuals of great eminence in parliament, were prevented on that occasion, though by very different causes, from delivering their opinions, on Pitt's proposed measure of reform. The first, Sir George Saville, who rose when Mr. Thomas Pitt sat down, and who always strongly supported every proposition for restraining the power of the crown; was compelled by severe indisposition to stop short, after pronouncing only a few sentences. The disorders under which he laboured, and which had already impaired his bodily strength, though not the activity of his mind, conducted him soon afterwards to the grave. Burke, whose powerful abilities would have been thrown into the opposite scale; — for he was always an enemy to experiments on the representation, or on the Constitution; — stood up when Fox concluded, with the intention of replying to the arguments of the secretary his friend. But the disinclination evinced to hear him, and the noise made by those members who dreaded the prolixity of his speeches, was so great, as at once to ir-

ritate and disgust a man, who, with all his splendid talents, never learned or practised the secret of knowing how and when to address the house. With strong marks of indignation in his countenance and gestures, he resumed his seat. With perfect truth did Goldsmith assert of Burke, when preparing to open his exhaustless stores of knowledge, to men fatigued, or averse to receive his information, that

“He thought of convincing when they thought of dining;”

while Sheridan possessed so nice a tact, and knew so well how to contract his matter, when he perceived an impatience or a disinclination to listen, that he never experienced the mortifying rejection which Burke provoked.

Rigby made a conspicuous figure towards the close of this memorable debate. Unlike Dundas, who had laid at the feet of Pitt, his former opinions; Rigby maintained them in all their force. Nor did he fail to express the utmost astonishment at the change which had taken place in the sentiments of his friend the learned lord, on the subject under discussion. The friendship to which he alluded, had however suffered some injury since Lord North's resignation, during more than a year, in consequence of the rapid succession of ministerial changes, and political events; and they no longer acted, as formerly, in concert. Dundas kept his eye only upon Pitt. Rigby, pressed to pay into the exchequer, his vast balances of public money, was compelled to adapt his conduct to circumstances. Their union might indeed be already considered as at an end. The ex-paymaster finally joined the *coalition*: while the lord advocate remained unalterably attached to the rising star of Chatham; by the influence of which, added to his own distinguished abilities, he not only attained and long occupied, some of the highest employments; but ultimately closed his career in the upper house of parliament. On the present occasion, Rigby expressed himself with his blunt, habitual, contemptuous frankness of language and of manner. Having treated the petitions for a more equal representation, as undeserving serious notice,

and alluding to the proposed addition of *county* members. “I do not allow,” exclaimed he, “that they are more respectable than the *burgesses*. I am myself a burgess, and so is the mover of this question. Never will I consent to any innovation or augmentation in the actual numbers of the commons. Nay, I would prefer beholding another member added to the borough of Old Sarum, which consists only of a single tenement, rather than allow another member to the city of London, which is already sufficiently represented in this assembly.” — “The spirit of innovation has been carried too far, while the influence of the crown is too much curtailed. Will ministers assert,” continued he, looking across the house at Fox, that they do not feel it; and feel it as an impediment to government, in carrying on the most necessary measures of administration?” — “The secretary of state signifying by his gestures, that he did not agree to the assertion, “I well know,” said Rigby, without being disconcerted, “that here, in this house, I shall receive no other reply.” It won't do for gentlemen who have been most clamorous in opposition, and who have for many sessions declaimed against the influence of the crown; to admit in the face of those whom they have misled, that they now, when seated on the treasury bench, smart under the inconvenience which they have themselves produced. But I am sure they feel it, and the public feel it not less.” — “I am as great an enemy to a dangerous extension of the royal influence as any man within these walls: but it forms as necessary an ingredient in the Constitution as the power of the Commons. And I hope, the time is not remote when that influence, so decried of late, will be restored to its former necessary and beneficial extent.” We cannot wonder that such opinions and principles, however odious they might be to the multitude convened in Palace Yard, should have formed powerful recommendations at St. James's. Mr. Pitt's resolutions were finally negatived by a far greater majority than in the preceding year; out of near four hundred and fifty members who voted, only one hundred and forty-nine having divided with him.

[May.] No man in office made a more conspicuous figure, or attracted more attention, during the session under consideration, than Burke: but it was not by any means such as his friends and admirers could contemplate either with pride, with pleasure, or even with approbation. It excited indeed great regret, that a person endowed with parts so eminent, and apparently animated by philanthropy so extended, should nevertheless allow himself at times to be led into the most unjustifiable deviations from ordinary prudence and propriety of conduct. In the present instance he involved his party, as well as himself, in equal embarrassment, by his intemperate precipitation. Two individuals, Powell and Bembridge, the one cashier, the other accountant, of the military pay-office, having been accused of malversations in the discharge of their functions, had been dismissed by Colonel Barré from their offices, while he was paymaster of the forces, under Lord Shelburne's administration. On Burke coming again into that employment, one of his first acts, without previously consulting Fox upon the subject, was to reinstate both those persons in their respective situations. Such a proceeding relative to functionaries labouring under heavy charges, and about to become subjects of criminal prosecution in the court of King's Bench naturally formed an object of discussion in the House of Commons, where it excited very pointed animadversion. Burke, petulant and irritable, defended with warmth the step that he had taken, though a measure in itself evidently contrary to the judgment of all parties. Fox, while he tacitly lamented and disapproved the act, yet, as he never abandoned his friends in distress, endeavoured to justify its author. The interference was, nevertheless, peculiarly painful and delicate on his part; Powell, who had risen under his father, the late Lord Holland, being supposed to have connived at some of the appropriations of public money, which were attributed, perhaps very unjustly, by popular prejudice, to that nobleman, while paymaster of the forces. It was for the corrupt concealment of a sum exceeding forty-eight

thousand pounds in the accounts of Lord Holland; that Powell and Bembridge were now about to undergo a trial. No circumstance therefore could have been less agreeable to Fox, while standing in the conspicuous situation of secretary of state, than to be thus compelled by Burke's imprudence in restoring them to their places, to come forward as the advocate and apologist of such a transaction.

On the first agitation of the business, Pitt having observed that the restoration of two men accused of malversation, appeared to reflect in no ordinary degree, on the authors of their dismission; as well as on the late attorney general (Kenyon), who had given his decided opinion against both the individuals; Sheridan rose in order to justify the transaction, as far as it involved ministers in any culpability. His vindication seeming to bear hard upon Kenyon, as if he had neglected his official duty in not commencing and following up a prosecution against them: he, who possessed a more than common portion of irritability, instantly came forward. In terms the most explicit he protested, that as soon as the case of Powell and Bembridge was laid before him he had delivered his opinion, that they ought to become objects equally of a civil and a criminal pursuit. "In so strong a point of view," added he, "did I see their conduct, as to leave me no hesitation in declaring to the persons who were then in power, that such enormous offenders ought not to be suffered to remain in places of trust." Under this heavy charge, made from so high a quarter, Burke did not at first display any unbecoming warmth. On the contrary, he rather endeavoured to extenuate, to explain, and to palliate, than either wholly to deny, or to vindicate, the acts committed in his office. But Martin, who had always expressed a decided condemnation of the *coalition*, which political junction he embraced every opportunity of reprobating; having observed that he regarded the restoration of the cashier and accountant of the military pay office, *as a gross and daring insult to the public*; Burke lost all control over his temper. In a manner the most furious, starting up from the

treasury bench on which he was seated, he unquestionably would have given way to his rage, in words the most unbecoming, if more than one of his friends near him, had not forcibly pulled him down in his place, and held him there. Sir Edward Astley having nevertheless repeated Martin's assertion; adding, that "to replace two individuals accused of a crime amounting to public robbery, implied a contempt of public opinion, and was a daring insult;" Fox found it high time to interfere. His speech, while it implied his regret at the injudicious conduct of the paymaster, and his disapprobation of the whole transaction, yet made the most temperate, able, and effectual appeal to the candour and liberality of the house. After declaring that he never had heard of the restoration of the two persons in question, till Burke himself had communicated to him the fact, at St. James's, just as he was entering the king's closet; he readily admitted the indispensable necessity for an inquiry taking place. "But," added he, "Mr. Burke thinking that punishment ought not to precede inquiry, has restored them to their situation; determined, no doubt, on suiting his future conduct to the eventual issue." With great address Fox threw a veil over the infirmity of his friend; and, being assisted by the Speaker, who declared the whole conversation to be disorderly, as there was not any question before the house, the business was stopped. This discussion took place on the second of May.

[19th—21st May.] A transaction of so extraordinary a nature, which involved in it either the paymaster who had suspended, or the paymaster who had restored, the two accused individuals; though it might be arrested for a short time, yet could not, however, be wholly suppressed by ministerial power and interference. The belief and even conviction of Powell and Bembridge's guilt becoming universal, the subject was soon renewed in the House of Commons. Lord Newhaven, one of the two members for Gatton in Surrey, a borough of which he was then the proprietor; and who had been raised from the rank of a baronet to the dignity of an Irish peer, by Lord North, during the course of his administration, became the involuntary

instrument of reviving the discussion. For, he having made a motion on the 24th of April, to lay on the table the treasury minute respecting the suspension of Powell and Bembridge, with a view to commence an inquiry into the affair, now moved to discharge the order. He assigned as a reason for this seeming inconsistency, that a prosecution having been commenced in the courts below, it would be unbecoming to continue the inquiry within those walls. But his proposition was strongly opposed from various quarters. Sir Cecil Wray, who, though he possessed no superior talents, was independent in mind, as well as in fortune, expressed his astonishment that the paymaster general should reinstate two persons, suspected of so great a crime as the embezzlement of public money. The reasons assigned by Burke for his conduct, namely, that he believed them innocent, and that he was responsible, not to the house, but to the public," appeared to him (Sir Cecil Wray), by no means satisfactory.

Mr. Powis, as well as other members, sustaining the arguments, Burke was necessitated to enter on his defence, which he did with temper, if not with judgment. It would, indeed, have been most imprudent, as well as dangerous, to have allowed his anger to predominate over his reason, after plunging himself into so complicated an embarrassment. He excused the violence which he had displayed during the former debate, by alleging the respect he felt for the house, and his extreme sensibility to any marks of their displeasure. But he in the same breath desired it to be understood, that nothing could be more remote from his present intention than to offer any excuse for his conduct relative to the two unfortunate gentlemen in question. "On that point," added he, "I feel such a sunshine of content within, that if the act were undone, I am convinced I should repeat it. My invariable maxim and rule of conduct, is to be compassionate and to protect the unfortunate, while I do not find them to be criminal. The individuals under discussion have been committed to my protection by Providence, and I have only performed my duty by replacing

them in their situations. I nevertheless disclaim every idea of having either acted in concert with his majesty's ministers, or of even having asked their advice. Nay more, I protest that I have retained these persons in office contrary to their own prayers and entreaties.—As to my own share in this affair, I care not how deeply it is probed. My mind filled with conscious rectitude of intention, was never more tranquil than on the present occasion."

A defence, if such it can properly be denominated, which seemed to set all common rules of human action at defiance, and might justly be thought to impeach the sanity of Burke's mind, did not tend to conciliate his audience, or to stop all further inquiry. Pitt, Dundas, Kenyon, Mr. Thomas Pitt, Pepper Arden, Colonel Barré, and many others, persisted to demand that the treasury minutes should be laid on the table. Ministers, on the other hand, though they admitted the imprudence of the paymaster, and lamented it, yet resisted any disclosure whatever, under the pretence that it might prejudice the accused parties, if made previous to the criminal proceedings about to take place in the courts of judicature. Fox exerted all the powers of reasoning, and Sheridan exhausted his ingenuity, in endeavours to protect their friend. General Conway, while he avowed that Burke's conduct did not meet his approbation, yet refused to consent to the production of the minutes. Nor did Lord North decline to perform on that evening, the service of a faithful ally to his new colleagues. He not only voted, but spoke in the course of the debate with great apparent animation. To him, indeed, and to his adherents, more than to the Rockingham party, was to be attributed the slender majority by which ministers ultimately prevailed. Even that triumph, if it could deserve the name, was not obtained till Lee, the solicitor-general, had solemnly pledged himself to the house, that the prosecution against Powell and Bembridge should be seriously conducted. As the best proof of his sincerity, he called on the late attorney and solicitor general, to aid him in the proceeding. Under these circumstances, after a debate of great acrimony,

and of considerable length, a division took place. Near three hundred members were present, of which number, one hundred and thirty-seven voted for producing the treasury minutes. One hundred and sixty-one supported government; thus carrying the question only by twenty-four. But the real victory remained with opposition,—the victory of public opinion; for probably, among those persons who supported administration, scarcely ten individuals approved the cause in which they engaged.

Mr. Rolle, member for the county of Devon, who has been since raised to the peerage; justly considering Burke's conduct as not only wrong in itself, but insulting to the country at large; brought the consideration of it a third time, before the house. Having demanded of the paymaster, whether he still retained his determination to keep Powell and Bembridge in their employments, Burke rose, and pronounced a speech of near two hours. He was indeed several times interrupted, and called to order; the irritation of his temper carrying him into digressions altogether irrelevant to the subject under discussion. Great eccentricity, if not aberration of mind, characterized many passages of his defence; which implied a distempered imagination, under the influence of strong feeling, but destitute of the control of sober reason. He compared himself to an Indian savage, roasted by one of his countrymen, and served up as a dish, or as an *entre-met*. After calling on God to witness, that in all the proceedings relative to the two accused persons, he had been actuated solely by motives of justice and of conscience; he nevertheless added, that as so large and respectable a body of members had appeared to censure his conduct, he would give way. His bill for reforming the royal household, he said, constituted his irremissible crime, and had procured him numerous enemies. To that cause he appeared to attribute the present attack upon his conduct, as well as the successive interruptions that he underwent. Of Powell and Bembridge he spoke, not only as men of uncommon official merit, but of religious integrity. Then diverging to other points apparently unconnected with the topic before the house, he lamented

Lord Rockingham's decease ; put himself upon God and his country ; claimed the merit of his reforms ; and added, that he had still great matters of a similar description to propose to parliament, if they did not fetter him in the mode of carrying them into execution. Mingling some of the finest passages of Virgil and of Shakspeare, with his own justification, he impressed his audience with mingled pity and admiration. Having concluded, he started up again, merely to state that Powell had already resigned, at his own request, and that Bembridge had made a similar offer ; but he trusted the house would not insist on its being carried into execution.

Mr. Rolle continuing nevertheless to be of opinion that the latter ought equally to be suspended, Fox interposed ; and though he deprecated the measure taking place previous to a trial in Westminster Hall, yet, he subjoined, that as so respectable a minority thought otherwise, he wished his friend to accept Bembridge's resignation. Rigby tried however one more effort in his behalf, but without effect. The ex-paymaster making on this occasion, common cause with his present successor ; after bearing ample testimony to the high merits of the two culprits during thirteen years that he had held the office ; endeavoured to show that no possible injury would accrue to the public, from suffering Bembridge to exercise the functions of accountant. His eloquence proved equally unavailing with Burke's pathetic and querulous invocations. The house remained inexorable ; and Fox did not dare to hazard the experiment of a second division, by which, whatever might be the result, government would only augment the obloquy already incurred. Burke therefore appeared sullenly to acquiesce ; declaring at the same time, that he would not be responsible for the consequences which might accrue from the resignation of Bembridge. So doubtful however did his submission seem, and so strong was his repugnance to obey the orders of parliament, that Rolle repeated his enquiries on the subject, a few days afterwards ; during which short interval of time, Powell fell a victim to his reflections. This disastrous circumstance augmenting the irritation of Burke's mind,

he refused to answer the question put to him ; and the whole business would have been agitated anew, if Rigby had not risen to satisfy the demand, by declaring that Bembridge was actually suspended.

The House of Commons, however strong a disposition they showed on every occasion, to approve and to sanction the general measures of administration ; manifested nevertheless strong disapprobation of Burke's conduct in this instance. Powell, overcome either by the weight of his own distress, or by his inability to sustain the public opinion of his culpability ; after losing in a great measure the use of his faculties, put an end to his existence with a razor. Bembridge, endowed with a firmer mind, or with stronger nerves, was reserved for the infamy of a public trial and condemnation, before Lord Mansfield. The prosecution, which took place some months afterwards ; reluctantly, but ably and fairly conducted by Lee, the solicitor general, terminated in the complete exposure of the fraud imputed to Bembridge, for which the court sentenced him to a severe fine and imprisonment. Every exertion which the purity of our jurisprudence will allow, was made to soften, or to avert, the severity of the stroke.* Burke, who did not hesitate to appear in court, seated upon the bench, during the proceedings, gave the strongest attestations to Bembridge's character for integrity. He was accompanied there by Lord North, who likewise condescended to join in a similar testimony to the good conduct and probity of the accused, during the time that he had, himself, formerly held the post of joint paymaster of the forces. But these efforts, which proved unavailing, only attracted censure towards the persons who thus attempted to screen from punishment, a conspicuous delinquent : while the proofs exhibited of his guilt, impressed the public mind with opinions highly unfavourable, not merely to Burke himself, at least in a prudential point of view ; but to the ministry in which he filled so distinguished a place.

[3d June.] Scarcely had this affair terminated, when Burke plunged himself into a second embarrassment, hardly less

painful to his friends. A bill for the regulation of the pay office, having been brought into the House of Commons by himself, which gave rise to much discussion and difference of opinion, in its passage through the committee; the contending parties agreed to fill up the blanks amicably, after the house rose, round the Speaker's chair. Burke being paymaster general, of course took an active part, as did many other members; and the clauses were understood to have been settled in the way specified, by mutual consent. But Mr. Estwick, member for Westbury, on a motion for the third reading of the bill, to the astonishment of the house, rising up in his place, preferred a formal charge against Burke; accusing him of having gone into the engrossing room, after the bill in question had been carried there; of expunging three clauses, and altering a fourth, all which he re-modelled to his own taste. Such an act, if it had been proved, might have led to very grave consequences; and must in any case have attracted public censure, or produced a reprimand from the chair. Fox immediately came forward with his characteristic manliness of mind, to the aid of his friend, whose conduct was severely arraigned by Pitt. The house admitted the secretary's justification as satisfactory, and did not inflict any mark of its disapprobation on Burke; though the excuses offered, or reasons alleged, for his conduct, were by no means such as completely exculpated him in the opinions of impartial men. It appeared, however, by the testimony of Cornwall the Speaker, that Burke had not, as he was accused of doing, either expunged or altered any clause in the engrossing office. The Speaker at least asserted, and the house lent credit to his assurance, that the misconception had arisen from the circumstance of his having put the question on the four clauses, under an impression that the parties were agreed, in so low a tone of voice, that they all passed without notice. Pitt contended, that even though this extraordinary fact were true, yet the expunged clauses must be restored, and debated anew by the house. As the proposition could not be refused, they were therefore brought up, and finally negatived on a division, though

only by a majority of twenty-eight votes. The Speaker's testimony, whether accurate or not, extricated Burke; and Fox manifested the generous ardour of his mind throughout the whole transaction; an ardour which always impelled him to cover the errors of those, with whom he was connected in politics or friendship. But he did not the less in private condemn Burke's imprudence; and he was said to have warned the paymaster of the forces, as he valued his office, not to involve his friends, and the administration of which he composed so conspicuous a member, in a third similar dilemma, during the remainder of the session.

In the course of the debate which arose respecting the expunged clauses, some expressions of great asperity were used and retorted by the heads of party on opposite sides of the house. Pitt, throughout the whole period of time that the *coalition* remained in possession of the government, always affected to consider ministers, as having availed themselves of the forms of the Constitution, in order to violate its essence, and to hold the king in bondage. While dilating on the act attributed to Burke, he did not hesitate to warn them how they ventured to make a bad use of their *ill-gotten power*." Lord North immediately rose, and repeating the words with a note of admiration, observed, that "if *power* acquired in consequence of a vote of that assembly, condemning the late administration for having concluded a bad peace, could be denominated *ill-gotten*, undoubtedly the language just used was correct. But if such *power* had been *constitutionally* obtained, as he maintained to be the case, then he could not sufficiently express his surprise at the expression." "As to the *use*," continued he, "which we shall make of our power, I trust, it will not discredit us. We have two principal objects to pursue. The first is, to do many things which our predecessors promised to accomplish, but which they have left undone. The other is, to prevent the mischiefs resulting from what they have done." The ability, as well as the wit of this reply, did not silence the opposition. Mr. Hill, in particular, remarked on the political phenomenon which the treasury bench exhibited, where two individuals,

who a year ago, would not trust themselves together in the same room, were now beheld cordially embracing each other. "The house will suppose," continued he, "that I mean, the secretary for the whig department, and the secretary for the tory department. Such, I will not deny, is my meaning; and I beg to assure the loving couple, that if they continue united for a twelvemonth, they shall have my hearty vote for the *flitch of bacon*. *Necessity* is the grand argument used on all occasions, to justify the present *coalition*. I believe, much truth is couched under that single word."

Unquestionably, public opinion was adverse to the ministers; and as they well knew how odious they were at St. James's, it behoved them to act with the greatest circumspection. Pitt did not allow a single act of their administration to pass unexamined; and he possessed a great superiority over two men, who however resplendent might be their ability, and however numerous their followers, yet were universally considered as having made mutual sacrifices of principle, to the gratification of their ambition. It is true that the cabinet had been taken by storm in March, 1782, as well as in March, 1783: but the same fact gave rise to very opposite sensations throughout the country. The respective adherents of Lord Rockingham and of the Earl of Shelburne, though they broke out into the most inveterate hostility, as soon as they became masters of the government; yet were impelled by one common leading object, that of terminating the contest with America: — an object, to which, under the circumstances of the time, the great majority of the nation fervently wished success. Lord North and Fox derived no support from popular favour. Their possession of power stood solely on two votes of the House of Commons. Nor could they claim any merit for having expelled a ministry, which by ill success, disgraces, and losses of territory, was become unpopular or contemptible. Scarcely did the *coalition* venture to condemn the peace, for having concluded which, Lord Shelburne was driven out of office. Indeed, it has always appeared doubtful to me, whether the same majority which censured the treaties, would have voted

for the removal of the first minister who signed them. Lord North manifested much more firmness or pertinacity, than was displayed by the Earl of Shelburne. It may perhaps be said that Lord North still retained, even down to the last day of his stay in office, a majority, though small: while Lord Shelburne was twice left in a minority. But the former nobleman, let it be recollected, had a long and an awful balance to adjust with parliament, as well as with the people of England. Impeachments, prosecutions, nay, axes and scaffolds, had been held up before him, who beheld an empire dissevered from Great Britain, while he presided in the councils of the crown. The latter minister had, on the contrary, witnessed scarcely any except prosperous events during his short administration, which he had terminated by concluding peace. He, therefore, might without any personal danger, have waited for more decided and affirmative testimonies of parliamentary condemnation, before he gave in his resignation. Why he did not so act, I will not presume to say: but I am convinced, that if Mr. Pitt had occupied Lord Shelburne's place in February, 1783, he probably would have maintained himself in it, and finally have triumphed over the *coalition*.

Among the persons of eminence who have "strutted their hour," under the reign of George the Third, and who about this time disappeared from the great public theatre, may be named General Sir John Irwine. His person, manners, and conversation, were all made for the drawing room, where he seemed to be in his native element. Though declining in life, yet his figure, tall, graceful, and dignified, set off by all the ornaments of dress, accompanied with a ribband and a star, rendered him conspicuous in every company. He constantly reminded me of a marshal of France, such as they are described by St. Simon, under Louis the Fourteenth. His politeness, though somewhat formal, was nevertheless natural and captivating. Perhaps, at least so his enemies asserted, his military talents were not equally brilliant with his personal accomplishments; but he had not risen the more slowly on that account, to the honours, or to the eminences, of his profession.

While he was yet only a school-boy, his father, Lieutenant-General Irwine, gave him a company in his own regiment, leaving him subsequently a very good estate. Besides a regiment (the Sixth of Dragoon Guards), and a government, conferred on him by the crown, he had held during several years, the post of commander-in-chief in Ireland, with very ample appointments and advantages. But no income, however large, could suffice for his expenses, which being never restrained within any reasonable limits, finally involved him in irretrievable difficulties. The fact will hardly obtain belief, that at one of the entertainments which he gave to the lord lieutenant in the year 1781, at Dublin, he displayed on the table, as the principal piece in the dessert, a representation of the fortress of Gibraltar invested by the Spanish forces, executed in confectionery. It exhibited a faithful view of that celebrated rock, so dear to the English nation; together with the works, batteries, and artillery of the besiegers, which threw sugar-plums against the walls. The expense of this ostentatious piece of magnificence, did not fall short of fifteen hundred pounds; and so incredible must the circumstance appear; that if I had not received the assurance of it from Lord Sackville, I should not venture to report it in these Memoirs.

The greatest intimacy subsisted between that nobleman and Sir John, who owed much of his advancement and success in life to the protection of Lionel, Duke of Dorset. Lord Sackville's disinterested friendship still continued to bring him into parliament, as his own colleague for East Grinstead, after Irwine's return from Ireland, which took place on the dissolution of Lord North's administration, down to his final departure from England. Decorated with the order of the *Bath*, which then conferred much distinction; and of which he never failed to display the insignia whenever he went to the House of Commons, his personal appearance was imposing. Even of a morning, in his greatest undress, he wore a small star embroidered on his frock, without which he rarely appeared any where; and his travelling hussar

cloaks, bore the same brilliant badge of knighthood. No man better knew the value of external figure, aided by manner; and Philip, Earl of Chesterfield himself, had not more successfully studied the Graces. It was impossible to possess finer manners, without any affectation; or more perfect good breeding. With such pretensions of person and of address, it cannot surprise that he attained to a great degree of favour at St. James's. The king considered and treated Irwine, as a person whose conversation afforded him peculiar gratification. He often delighted to protract the discourse with a courtier, whose powers of entertainment, however extensive, were always under the restraint of profound respect; and who never forgot the character of the prince whom he addressed, even for a single moment. Irwine, though so fine a gentleman, loved all the indulgencies of conviviality, in which gratifications he never restrained himself. The king, not unacquainted with these particulars, having said to him one day, at the drawing room, when conversing on his common mode of life, "they tell me, Sir John, that you love a glass of wine;" "Those, sir, who have so reported of me to your majesty," answered he, bowing profoundly, "have done me great injustice, "they should have said a bottle."

Sir John Irwine's second wife, a daughter of the celebrated physician Sir Edward Barry, who wrote with so much elegance and information on the "*Wines of the Ancients*," brought him no issue: but he afterwards contracted a third matrimonial connection. On his return to England, his debts became so numerous, and his creditors so importunate, that though as a member of parliament, his person still remained secure, he found it impossible to reside longer with comfort in London. Quitting therefore privately his elegant house in Piccadilly, opposite the Green Park, he retired to the continent, with his wife and two children. Landing in France, he hired a *chateau* in the province of Normandy, where his military rank and decorations secured for him every testimony of respect from the surrounding gentry. He

nevertheless soon experienced such pecuniary difficulties, that as he could nourish no hope of ever revisiting his native country, he removed over the Alps into Italy. The king, who sincerely regretted his departure from England, and who well knew the causes of it, often expressed his concern for Sir John Irwine's misfortunes; which he endeavoured to alleviate by sending Sir John, the sum of a thousand pounds from his privy purse, in two separate payments. I know this fact from the late Sir Charles Hotham; who was, I think, himself, the channel through which his majesty transmitted the first donation of five hundred pounds. The second annual payment reached Parma, on the morning of Sir John Irwine's decease. He expired in that city, towards the close of May, 1788, where he enjoyed the favour and even intimacy of the Duke of Parma, and the Archduchess Amelia his consort, who were then the reigning princes. He had nearly attained his sixty-first year at the time of his death; and his characteristic habits of hospitality, accompanied with corresponding expense, distinguished him to the last moments of his career. While resident at Parma, he kept open house for all Englishmen of consideration who passed through the place; and only a few days previous to his decease, he gave a ball and supper to the sovereigns of Parma. Yet all the authority of the duke was vainly exerted to procure him the rites of Christian burial, it being opposed by the priests of that bigotted country. The remains of Sir John Irwine were privately conveyed by night, and deposited in the court yard of a protestant banker; the funeral service being read by an English gentleman, and the body being followed to the grave by the few individuals of the same nation who were then at Parma. Perhaps I ought here to add, that Sir John Irwine's widow and children owed to the generous interposition and personal applications of the late Lord Melville (then Mr. Dundas), a pension, which his majesty granted them. Nor can I induce myself to omit, as it does the highest honour to that nobleman, that he obtained and forwarded to Lady Irwine, the grant in

question, at a time when she had vainly solicited it from all the friends of her late husband, while Mr. Dundas was hardly known to him as a common acquaintance. Such acts demonstrate an enlarged and magnanimous mind.*

Lord John Cavendish, though he had negotiated and brought forward the *loan* necessary to be raised, soon after he entered on office, yet did not propose the taxes which were to pay the interest of it, until many weeks later in the session. He at length laid them before the House of Commons, where, on the whole, they appeared to meet with general approbation, and even attracted some encomiums. But Lord John, whose talents were not eminently adapted for the discussion of measures of finance, having stated his ways and means with tolerable precision, left the task of explaining and defending them principally to his associates in power. Fox and Lord North, who undertook it with great ability, repelled the comments made from the opposition side of the house, on the new taxes: while the chancellor of the exchequer, quitting his seat on the treasury bench, retired during a considerable part of the debate, behind the Speaker's chair; from which retreat he peeped out on either side, as individuals rose, for the purpose of approving or of censuring his *budget*. Lord Mahon attacked it with his characteristic impetuosity of voice and manner, accompanying his comments with most severe animadversions on Lord North's financial plans, while he had remained at the head of the treasury. Fox defended his colleague, both with the arms of reason and ridicule, which instantly brought forward Pitt. Between them the discussion was maintained with equal acrimony and ingenuity for a long time. Pitt not only repeated Lord Mahon's assertions relative to Lord North's taxes, which, he said, from their impolicy had generally frustrated their intended object, but added: "The present

* For these particulars, as well as for the correction of some errors into which I had fallen relative to Sir John Irwine, I am indebted to the lady of Captain Walker, of his majesty's royal navy, Sir John's daughter, who obligingly favoured me with them, under her hand.

budget seems to be of a similar description. False or erroneous principles are assumed, in order to support the measures adopted, which the people of England are expected to swallow as greedily as *the champion of the people* has uttered them with rapidity." Fox took his revenge on the whole cabinet of the Earl of Shelburne collectively, whom he designated "as incapable of financial generation as it was possible for barrenness to be: having quitted their employments without leaving behind them a trace of any loan or taxes." Lord North directed the shafts of his wit principally against Lord Mahon, "whose abilities," he observed, "being so great, without experience, must, when matured by time, render him a prodigy, and an ornament to his country, at the head of the exchequer."

Lord John Cavendish performed only a subordinate part, throughout the whole debate. His acknowledged purity of character, when joined to his many virtues, — not to dwell on his high descent, — rendered him universally respected; and the advantage which his party derived from those qualities, in the public estimation, was incalculable. The nation even seemed silently to demand some such guarantee, when the interests of the country were committed to a man of Fox's ruined fortune and dissipated habits of life. Mr. Pitt, it is true, who had been so recently placed at the head of the exchequer, scarcely possessed more property than his rival. But the people of England knew how to discriminate between their respective deficiency. Pitt, though not more distinguished by habits of economy than Fox, yet had not dissipated his small paternal fortune in any ostensible vices; while Fox, besides a landed estate and a lucrative office, both which he sold, had squandered an immense sum of ready money. Indeed, though Fox always appeared to me, whenever *loans* or *budgets* were discussed in parliament, to display a capacity for arithmetical calculation, and all the talents requisite for a minister of finance, scarcely, if at all inferior to Mr. Pitt's ability in that line; yet, I believe, it never occurred to any man's mind, to place Fox in the control of the treasury, or of the exchequer, at any

period of his life. Almost as well might Henry the Fifth have placed Falstaff there. Fox himself seemed not to emulate a higher post than secretary of state, always interposing Lord John Cavendish in the guardianship of the public money. Nor could the British people confide their interests to more incorruptible integrity, than distinguished the chancellor of the exchequer: but he could not sustain the slightest comparison with Pitt, nor even with Lord North, in the powers of his mind and understanding, or in his parliamentary talents and knowledge of business.

[2d and 3d June.] The parliamentary prosecution instituted against Sir Thomas Rumbold, continued to languish, rather than to advance towards any consummation, throughout the whole session. Nevertheless, at this time, the evidence in his defence being closed, Mr. Dundas rose, and moved that the proceedings should not be discontinued by either a prorogation or a dissolution of parliament. This motion, which was intended to be accompanied with a bill for restraining Rumbold from quitting the kingdom, or from alienating his property, till the final decision of the enquiry, gave rise to much difference of opinion. Sawbridge, Lord Nugent, and various other members, though by no means partial to the accused person, yet declared that they considered the whole business as unconstitutional and oppressive. Rigby, near two months earlier, when the subject was agitated in the house, had not hesitated to stigmatise it with epithets of condemnation and derision. Accustomed to speak his sentiments on every topic, with a blunt, overbearing, as well as dictatorial tone, "This assembly," observed he, "is acting in a capacity, partly legislative, partly judicial. We are now performing the functions of a judge, and for aught I see, we may have to do the office of hangman." On the present occasion, he treated the motion in a similar manner. "We are asked," said he, "to continue the bill in existence, even after a dissolution of parliament. What! are we to bind five hundred and fifty-eight other individuals, to abide by and to adopt the evidence which we alone have heard? The proposition excites ridicule."

Rumbold himself, addressing the house, made a very forcible and pathetic appeal to their feelings, no less than to their justice. And he was heard with great attention. In language of energy, he depicted his sufferings; deprecated all further delay, implored the house, for their own honour and dignity, to accelerate the conclusion; cited *Magna Charta*, the bulwark of our liberties, where it is expressly declared that the subject shall experience no delay of justice; and protested, that whatever might prove their decision, he would not shrink from it. Nor did he omit to remark in how different a manner, Burke, who was one of his ardent prosecutors, had conducted himself towards Powell and Bembridge; — men accused, like himself, but not proved to be criminal. Lord North, though he voted for the motion (probably, more from consideration for his new allies, than from inclination), yet agreed with Rigby in opinion, that one parliament could not bind another; still less could the present House of Commons who *heard* the evidence, legislate for their successors, and compel them to *decide* on that evidence. The solicitor general, Lee, a man of upright principles, though of rude and repulsive manners; who had uniformly disapproved the whole proceedings, declared that he could perceive no reason for changing his opinion relative to them; and therefore, as far as his individual vote extended, he would never consent to retain Rumbold under the terrors of a restraining act. Nevertheless as Pitt and Fox, Dundas and Burke, who rarely concurred on any point, agreed on this subject, leave was given to bring in the bill: but its features were softened down by the lord advocate, when he presented it, next day. Sir Thomas's personal property remained no longer tied up; only his landed estate at Woodhall in the county of Hertford, being rendered responsible; and he was permitted to quit the kingdom, from which exercise of his freedom he had been previously interdicted. At this point terminated the prosecution, which may be said to have died of a political atrophy.

While the Rockingham party, during many years had been excluded from office, they loudly declaimed against abuses

of every description, particularly against the extravagant expenditure of the public money in various departments. Nor during the very short period that the treasury was under their control, which did not exceed three months, can it be denied that they endeavoured to manifest the sincerity of their engagements. Burke, who stood forward in the invidious character of a reformer, acquired no inconsiderable merit with the country at large, by his exertions to reduce exorbitant demands, or to abolish obsolete and overgrown establishments of every kind. But with Lord Rockingham's life, these efforts wholly ceased. From the period of their union with Lord North, when they began confidently to count on a quiet possession of power and emolument, at least for a few years, in consequence of their strength in both houses of parliament; they seemed to have greatly relaxed in the severity of their political principles. Above all, they manifested a decided aversion to any reforms which did not originate with themselves, and which were not subjected to their own ministerial control. A striking exemplification of this fact, presented itself before the end of the session.

Mr. Pitt, who watched all their conduct, and canvassed all their measures, with jealous, as well as unremitting attention; having brought forward a bill, in order to establish regulations in the fees, perquisites, and other emoluments received in most of the public offices; instead of finding any support from the other side of the house, as might naturally have been expected, met with the warmest opposition in that quarter. Lord John Cavendish possessed indeed too much ingenuousness of character, altogether to dispute the utility of the objects proposed, and therefore contented himself with partially and indirectly resisting the plan: but Fox and Burke loaded the bill, its author, and the administration of which he had lately composed a part, with the severest epithets or imputations. One of the topics on which they commonly exhausted their ridicule and contempt, was the speech pronounced from the throne, at the opening of the session. This composition, they affected to consider as a mass of unmeaning promises, either in themselves

improper to be reduced to practice, or never intended for any purpose, except delusion. Pitt, therefore, had in view to rescue the administration in which he had occupied a distinguished place, from charges so injurious; and when he introduced the measure, he observed, that it would prove "his majesty's speech was not full of mere empty profession; but on the contrary, the ministers of that period, if they had continued in power, were determined to have carried every part of it into effect." Burke, indignant, and accustomed during many years to treat Lord North, while plunged in the embarrassments of the American war, with language of great asperity, did not sufficiently recollect with how different an antagonist he now had to contend. Rising in one of those paroxysms of anger to which he was subject, he exclaimed, that "the conduct of the late cabinet must be exposed, for which purpose he should move to lay certain papers on the table. The house," added he, "will then have at once displayed before them, the plans of pretended reform, contrasted with the practices of abuse. From the comparison, it may be ascertained whether the speech in question, was not a parade of profession and promise, while their measures were full of criminality." Expressions so strong, were not allowed by Pitt to pass without instant animadversion. "Let the question between us," replied he, "be brought to an immediate test, and a full enquiry set on foot. The right honorable gentleman best knows, whether bringing forward plans of theoretical reform, and committing practical abuses in office, do, or do not meet in the same person." Not a word of reply being uttered from the treasury bench, Pitt's bill of regulation experienced no further opposition on that evening.

[17th June.] As it advanced however through the subsequent stages, every species of indirect hostility was manifested towards it, Lord John Cavendish himself representing it as useless or unnecessary; though Pitt, after entering into all the details of its operation, declared his firm conviction that it would save the public, at least forty thousand pounds a year. Fox repeated the words used by the chancellor of the

exchequer; to which Burke added, that the bill held out the reverse of true economical reform; substituting in its place, only vexation and expense. Some of the comparisons and allusions made by Burke in particular reflecting contemptuously on Pitt, as a projector and a reformer, appeared, when falling from *his* lips, to affect his audience with no little surprise; he having so recently, himself, laid claim to general approbation, in the same character. As it might nevertheless have seemed too indecorous, not to permit the bill to pass the House of Commons, ministers allowed it to go up to the Peers: but *there* the whole force of government drew out in array against the measure. Even the Duke of Portland, who seldom exhibited any specimens of eloquence, stigmatized it as "more a disease, than a remedy;" while Lord Fitzwilliam decried it, as being both trifling and vexatious in its nature. Thus attacked, the measure was finally negatived. Such a repugnance, demonstrated to the very objects of retrenchment, which they had themselves affected to introduce only a few months before, with so much zeal, even into the palace, and at the table of the sovereign; evidently, because they were now proposed from a hostile source; did not fail to make an adequate impression on the public mind. It operated to the disadvantage of the ministry in every quarter of the kingdom; and by unmasking them in some measure, it silently prepared the way for those astonishing events in the interior of the government, which took place before the conclusion of the year.

Some of the abuses which Pitt had attempted to point out and expose, in the progress of the bill which he introduced into the House of Commons, were indeed of a description so singular, as to excite not only astonishment, but even to produce a degree of ridicule. They served to show what extensive depredations had been committed upon the public in many, or in all the principal offices, previous to the period of Lord North's resignation. That nobleman formed the mark at which Pitt levelled his severest censures; nor could the house altogether refrain from laughter at one of the charges, specifying a sum of three hundred and forty pounds paid

to the secretary of the treasury, for the article of *whipcord*. The annual expense of the first minister, for his individual *stationery*, under which denomination was, however, included the *whipcord*, did not fall short, as it appeared, of thirteen hundred pounds. Lord North, when called on, made, nevertheless, not only a plausible, but a very satisfactory defence, to most of the alleged items. Relative to the consumption of *whipcord*, which had excited a great deal of mirth, having professed at the same time his total ignorance, Robinson undertook to give some sort of explanation; which, however ingenious, or even well founded it might be, yet diverted, more than it satisfied his hearers.

It is certain that during the period antecedent to 1782, the abuses practised in many great official departments, which exceeded all reasonable limits, loudly demanded parliamentary regulation. I have, myself, had occasion to hear, if not to see, specimens and instances of depredation (for they well merit the name), which will hardly obtain belief in the present days. I knew with some degree of intimacy, a lord of trade, who possessing a borough, and a very large fortune, was, himself, a member of the House of Commons in successive parliaments. On his being sworn in at the board of trade, he issued an order to provide a great number of pewter inkstands for his own use, which he afterwards commuted into one, composed of silver. I have seen him at the levee, dressed in a suit of green velvet, fabricated, as fame reported, out of the materials ordered in his public character, for the ostensible purpose of making bags to contain office papers. His friends and correspondents could recognise the stationery, of which he had made an ample provision, more than ten years after the board of trade itself, abolished by Burke's bill, had ceased to have any existence. Even *since* 1782, similar facts are said to have taken place. This gentleman, or rather his wife, formed one on the list of British peerages, intended to have been either revived or created, by Lord North and Fox; the number of which, as I recollect, amounted to thirty-two or thirty-three; if the *coalition* had forced their way a second

time into the cabinet, in the beginning of 1784, as they confidently expected.

Nor were these the only official and ministerial appropriations of the public money, to private purposes; that distinguished the times under our review. From the ministry of Sir Robert Walpole, down to the conclusion of Lord North's government, few places of considerable emolument, in any department, were given, wholly unfettered, to the nominal occupant. Even under Lord Rockingham's first administration in 1765, we find Wilkes *quartered* on the whole of the treasury and admiralty boards, to the annual amount of 1040*l.* a year; the marquis paying him 500*l.*; the inferior lords of the treasury 60*l.* each; and the members of the board of trade each 40*l.* This curious fact is stated in Horne's letter to "Junius," of the 31st July, 1771. It was not attempted to be denied. When the Duke of Grafton, in June of the same year, 1771, accepted the office of privy seal, which had been previously destined for Lord Weymouth, "Junius" more than insinuates, that the last mentioned nobleman was *quartered* by the Duke upon Rigby, who, from 1768 to 1782, nominally occupied the sole paymastership of the forces. I knew a lady of quality, who having been daughter to a person high in office, was commonly said to have *rode* sixteen persons at one time, to whom her father had given places, under that express condition or reservation. I believe she outlived them all. Governments, military appointments, offices in the excise and customs, — in a word, places of every description, at home and abroad, were frequently loaded with *riders*.

I remember, at the very time of which I am now speaking, in July, 1783, when the bill for regulating the offices in the exchequer, was before the House of Commons, Hussey, enumerating the abuses practised, asked, "Have ministers never heard of *quartering* one person upon another? Will they venture to assert that at this moment, no individual ostensibly out of place, is *quartered* upon the salary of some man in employment? I mean no imputation on the present government. Such practices, I believe, have prevailed under all admi-

nistrations, during many years." Neither Fox, nor Lord North, though both the one and the other rose to speak during the course of the evening, attempted to contest Hussey's assertion. Mr. Pitt himself, when introducing the bill to which allusion has been recently made, recapitulated many alienations of public money, which were then practised, but which we can scarcely credit in the present times. In the navy office, where no fees were allowed, and where, *under that name*, they were disclaimed, the chief clerk, whose salary did not exceed 250*l.* a year, received in *gifts* annually, full 2500*l.* The lords of the treasury were accustomed to appoint their own servants to the place of stampers in the stamp office, instantly granting them leave of absence, so that the duty was performed by deputy. Not only coals and candles, but even articles of furniture were ordered by persons in high employment, to be sent at the public expense, to their houses, both in London and in the country. The post office, and the dock yards presented facts equally demanding reform. Pitt declared that the annual aggregate charge on account of stationery wares, exceeded eighteen thousand pounds; adding, that he had heard of apartments being papered at the expense of the public. I feel it, however, incumbent on me to state, that Lord North made not only the most explicit and dignified reply to these allegations, as far as they regarded him personally or officially, but demonstrated his own disinterestedness while at the head of affairs. "When I was placed," said he, "in the control of the treasury, I found that my predecessors had invariably been supplied with coals and candles at the public expense, according to ancient established usage. Nevertheless, I did not avail myself of the practice, however confirmed by length of time, but purchased those articles out of my own purse." He subjoined, "I not only took every precaution, in order to prevent fraud from being committed in my name, but I assure the house I will make the most rigorous enquiries, and if I discover delinquency, I will leave nothing undone to bring the offenders to punishment." All these modes of augmenting the fair income or salary

of office, were extinguished, as I know, by Mr. Pitt, when he became first minister, throughout every department of the revenue, as far as his influence extended. But he was necessitated in many cases to commit a greater inroad on the Constitution, by distributing honours and dignities as a substitute for emoluments.

[25th and 26th June.] Notwithstanding the ascendant which Fox exercised over the cabinet, and in particular, over the chancellor of the exchequer, an event occurred at this time, where his influence proved unequal to overcome the obstacles opposed to it. The Prince of Wales approaching the period of his minority, a separate establishment became requisite for him; and Carlton House, which had not been inhabited since the decease of the Princess Dowager of Wales in 1772, was chosen to constitute his future residence. The income proper for his royal highness's support, became necessarily a subject of discussion among the members of administration, and produced great difference of opinion. Fox thought that the sum of one hundred thousand pounds, would not be more than adequate to maintain his state; while Lord John Cavendish, in whose immediate official department the business lay, conceived that a moiety of the sum might suffice, under the circumstances of the country, and the incumbrances on the civil list. His majesty, being of the latter sentiment, it was adopted; and Lord John having acquainted the house with the gracious determination of the sovereign, not to call on his people for any additional aid to his civil list, but to take on himself the present expense of the heir-apparent, limited his demand to the sum of sixty thousand pounds, as a temporary supply to the crown, and an outfit. Pitt instantly stood up, and having expressed his perfect approbation of the proposition, as by no means unreasonable or excessive, he passed some very high encomiums on the prince. Then, addressing his discourse pointedly to the secretary for foreign affairs, he observed that rumours had been circulated in a manner which seemed to stamp them with authenticity, of a very extraordinary nature. "Those rumours," continued he, "asserted, that it had been the intention of some of the king's

ministers, contrary to his majesty's avowed wishes, whose paternal affection for his subjects, suggested very different ideas to his royal mind; as well as contrary to a due consideration for the exhausted condition of the country; to have proposed a very enormous sum for the Prince of Wales's establishment. I rejoice exceedingly at finding those reports practically done away on this evening; but, I trust, that ministers will take the present occasion to rise in their places, and to deny that there ever existed the slightest foundation for such assertions. On so important a point, I expect that they will furnish us with an ample explanation."

Fox, thus called on, rose, and in the manly tone which always characterized him, replied, that as the vote now proposed, went only to the sum of fifty thousand pounds a year, that fact formed in itself a sufficient answer to the question. "But," he added, that "former Princes of Wales had received larger grants from parliament, for the support of their dignity." Having expatiated with equal eloquence and warmth of colouring, on the eminent, as well as shining virtues of the prince; not omitting the merit of his ready obedience on the present occasion, to his majesty's pleasure; the secretary added, "If, however, it had remained with *me* to advise, or had it been *my* province to make the application of this day, to the house, I do not hesitate to repeat that I should have asked for a much larger sum. But, as the person who possesses the best right to decide upon that point, has not coincided with me in sentiment, it becomes my duty to obey, and to act implicitly by his opinion." The vote then passed without a dissentient voice; but, on the following day, when the report was made from the committee of supply, Governor Johnstone resumed the subject. It required all the strength of nerves which he possessed, not to be deterred from touching upon a topic so delicate in itself, necessarily exposing the individual who agitated it, to a variety of unpleasant circumstances. Without, however, suffering these considerations to influence his conduct, Johnstone, after expressing his concurrence and satisfaction at the resolution of the

preceding evening; observed, that it appeared, the obligation was solely due to his majesty for taking the allowance now made to the Prince of Wales, out of the civil list; as well as for limiting to the sum of sixty thousand pounds, the aid demanded of parliament on the present occasion. "The ministers of the crown," continued he, "cannot lay claim to the slightest degree of merit from the alleviation thus effected in the burthens to be imposed upon the people. Much praise has indeed been bestowed by them, on the Prince of Wales, for submitting to so limited a provision; but, not a syllable has fallen from their lips, in praise of the king, who is the author of this meritorious transaction. I readily admit his royal highness's high merit; not, however, because the grant is in itself too small, or inadequate; but, because, from the expressions and avowal of the secretary of state, the prince has been encouraged to imagine that *double* the sum ought to have been given him, independent of the civil list, or of his father, arising from a vote of parliament, to be settled on himself." — "His majesty's ministers are most reprehensible, thus to recommend it in the deed, and to blast it in the act; insinuating in the plainest manner their desire to have granted his royal highness double the provision: at the same time informing us, that the present proposition emanates solely from the sovereign, whose will on the present point, they were unable to control." — "The actual allowance of fifty thousand pounds a year, with twelve thousand more issuing from the revenues of Cornwall and of Wales, constitute as ample an establishment for an unmarried heir-apparent, as a country pressed down by war and taxation, can with propriety bestow."

Fox having manifested some marks of contempt, or rather, of levity, at the last expression uttered by Johnstone, the governor exclaimed, "I well know, Mr. Speaker, that the largest sums appear as mites to the secretary of state, who is accustomed to set at defiance, all ideas of moderation in his own personal expenses; and who has now adopted the present desperate expedient for supplying his profusion and his ambition. To his majesty alone, we owe the pro-

position before us; and no persons are in general more lavish of encomiums on the sovereign, than the members of administration, when they mean to assume to themselves the merit of those acts. No such commendations have been now bestowed on the king, who is indirectly censured for granting so small a pittance to his son. Delicacy ought to have restrained ministers from expressing such sentiments in this assembly, while they think proper to occupy their official employments. By sullenly refusing to explain whether they will not soon call on us for further pecuniary assistance to the prince, they even encourage him to incur debts which must ultimately be liquidated by parliament." A speech so abounding with offensive personalities, it might naturally have been expected, would call up the secretary of state, who seldom remained silent under similar attacks. Nevertheless, the whole treasury bench sat mute, and the house rose immediately: but throughout the whole proceeding, Fox undoubtedly appeared rather in the character of a friend and an adherent of the heir to the throne, than as a confidential servant, and a cabinet minister of George the Third. Pitt, even while at the head of opposition, seemed to act more in the latter capacity.

I ought, however, in justice to say, that his parliamentary conduct, during the whole period of the *coalition* administration, displayed neither an illiberal, a vindictive, nor an undistinguishing resistance to ministerial measures. On the contrary he supported government on more than one occasion, when a factious member of the house might have acquired popularity by an opposite line of action. I could cite instances in proof of my assertion. In the list of taxes enumerated by the chancellor of the exchequer, and brought forward as part of his ways and means, was one, imposing a small stamp on receipts. This tax, which experienced great obstacles from various parts of the house, excited much clamour; but Pitt refused to lend himself to it, and declared his determination to give the bill his strenuous support. Among the favourite objects of the Shelburne mi-

nistry, might be justly reckoned the steps taken for compelling public accountants to pay in their balances of national money. Powis having about this time, demanded whether administration was occupied on a subject so important to the state: and Kenyon following up the question, by asking if the bill filed against Powell, as one of the executors of the late Lord Holland; but which had been suspended by Powell's tragical death, was about to be prosecuted; the solicitor-general (Lee), rose in reply. With the sincerity and independence of his natural character, which disdained all circumlocution, he answered, that "he never would revive the bill, to the extent of the former, which Powell's end had arrested." "The old bill," subjoined he, "reclaimed all the interest ever made by Lord Holland, while paymaster of the forces, out of the public money in his possession. I hold this measure to be so oppressive, as well as unjust; so contrary to long established usage, and of a nature which would occasion such apprehensions among all the descendants of former paymasters, that I will rather resign my office, than consent to countenance it."

Fox did not let pass the occasion thus offered him, of justifying his father's memory, at the expense of the late administration. "My noble relation," observed he, "was the only paymaster of the forces, whom those ministers selected for the purpose of exacting from his executors, sums which, if extorted, must reduce his family to beggary. For what was their demand? — The interest, not of money withheld from the public, after it had been reclaimed by government; but the whole accumulated gain made by Lord Holland, while at the head of the pay office. This was a prosecution, which, if the situation in which I personally stood with respect to the last cabinet, be considered, looked very much like persecution." Anxious probably to efface such an imputation, thrown on the individuals with whom he was so closely connected, Pitt instantly stood up, and declared that he did not think, interest of the retrospective and comprehensive nature described, ought to be demanded by the

public. But he justified the late attorney general (Kenyon), for having laid claim to it on the part of the country, as that law officer conceived it to be his duty. Adding, "an attorney-general ought not to exercise his discretion on such a point, or to leave unclaimed, any supposed right of the crown." Burke, however, starting up, exclaimed, "Precisely on the same ground, might the iniquitous ministers of Henry the Seventh, Empson and Dudley, be defended!" Here the matter terminated.

[10th July.] The fruitless attempt made by Pitt, to regulate the abuses of fees in the public offices, did not constitute the only unsuccessful parliamentary effort undertaken by him, during the session. A short time before its close, Lord John Cavendish, as it would appear, somewhat incautiously or inadvertently laid on the table, a book containing a list of public accountants, to whom sums of money, exceeding in the whole forty-four millions, had been issued by government, for which they had never passed any accounts before the auditors of the imprest. Pitt instantly endeavoured to induce the house to vote an address to the crown, requesting his majesty to take measures for compelling the persons named, to account for those sums; and for preventing a future recurrence of the same abuse. He seemed authorised to assume, that such a motion would be too analogous to the avowed disposition and professions of the Rockingham party, to experience from them any resistance. All the ability, wit and ingenuity of the ministerial benches, were nevertheless called out, in order to invalidate the authenticity of the very document, laid by the chancellor of the exchequer on the table; which book, his colleagues now declared to be destitute of proper authority, and consequently, an unsafe, as well as inefficient basis, on which to found the proposed address to the throne.

This treatment of Lord John in his official capacity, as minister of finance, by his own friends, in the face of the House of Commons, did not appear at first sight, either the most respectful to him, or even the most decorous to themselves. Sheridan with consummate ad-

dress, contrived, however to render it in some measure palatable, by a delicate mixture of compliment to his integrity, and of censure on his prudence: while Lord North and Fox played their whole artillery upon Pitt. The two secretaries of state seemed on that day, to act in perfect concert, and to be cordially united. To Fox, the motion was, indeed, one of deep interest; his father standing on the list, nominally for twelve, out of the forty-four millions, which had not been *formally* passed by the auditors of the imprest; though it seemed to be generally admitted, that the money issued to Lord Holland, was *substantially* accounted for by that nobleman's executors. Fox objected in strong terms, to the assertion of any specific sum remaining unaccounted for in the exchequer, and indirectly accused Pitt of meaning to implicate Lord Holland by the proposed vote, as a defaulter. "The right honorable gentleman," added he, "has probably the same intentions as those individuals manifested, who, when my noble relation had in his hands about four hundred thousand pounds of the public money, called him the *defaulter of unaccounted millions*." Nor was the secretary less severe on his colleague, the chancellor of the exchequer, than Sheridan had been; blaming Lord John's injudicious candour, in producing a document, of which so injurious a use had been made by the opposition. Having finally expunged the most essential clauses of the proposed address to the throne, ministers allowed it to pass the house.

[16th July.] The session, protracted to the middle of July, now drew towards a termination. During the space of about three months that parliament remained sitting after the formation of the new ministry, both houses, in particular, the Commons, had manifested the utmost disposition to give them every support. The opposition, though conducted by Pitt and Dundas, while it was tacitly, as well as powerfully sustained by Jenkinson; yet rarely ventured on a division, which only exposed the paucity and inferiority of their numbers. Lord North, however obscured he might be by the superior energy of Fox, still remained the nominal

leader of a very numerous body, who looked to him for protection against the violent members of the Rockingham party. But his colleague, without the title, was already become the real first minister; as the great Earl of Chatham had been formerly, under the late and present reign, when only secretary of state, or when holding the privy seal. The strength of Fox's character, the activity of his mind, the warmth of his friendship, and the splendour of his talents;—this combination of endowments naturally attracting adherents, enabled him to absorb the whole power of government. Burke, ardent, indefatigable, and never losing sight of his object, impatiently looked forward to the great task of reforming and remodelling India. The advanced season of the year at which the administration came into power, and that circumstance only, had induced Fox, as well as his colleagues, to allow the present session to elapse, without immediately availing themselves of the patronage, and multiplied sources of advantage, which the Indian empire offered to their avidity. It presented a rich harvest, which they devoured by anticipation; and the enjoyment of which they reluctantly postponed, even for a few months. But the magnitude, importance, and complicated nature of the political machine by which India was governed, demanded mature deliberation, before they ventured to reconstruct it, as they meditated, entirely on new principles. It was therefore finally determined in the cabinet, to call parliament together early in the approaching Autumn, for the purpose; and the king was expressly made to declare the intention, in his speech pronounced from the throne, on the prorogation. Sheridan, by a wonderful combination of almost all the talents which can meet in man, under the control of unalterable equality of temper, began already to compete with Burke in parliamentary estimation; and frequently obtained a more ready or patient hearing from the house. Every day, while it confirmed the ascendant which he had there acquired, placed him higher among the most distinguished supports of administration.

If the *coalition* looked round at home,

they beheld at this period, a docile parliament, originally called together by Lord North; and of which assembly he still retained in his hands, many of the secret springs or keys, in both houses. Abroad, everything announced the continuance of peace. America was indeed lost; but, the emancipated colonies had ceased to be hostile to Great Britain. France, exhausted even by her late advantages beyond the Atlantic, weak in her government, and altogether convulsed or deranged in her finances; already nourished in her vitals the seeds of that fatal revolution which has since overturned order, religion, morals, and the ancient fabric of Europe. Joseph the Second, Emperor of Germany, suppressing monasteries and religious establishments with one hand; with the other, in direct violation of all subsisting treaties, rashly and wantonly demolished to their foundations, the works of the garrison cities of the Austrian Netherlands. I witnessed, myself, during the course of that summer, the expulsion of the last remains of the Dutch troops maintained in the barrier towns, and the destruction or demolition of the fortifications themselves. Except Luxembourg, placed at one extremity, towards Germany; and the citadel of Antwerp, situate at the other termination of Flanders; it was obvious that scarcely any obstacle remained, to exclude France from overrunning the low countries at her pleasure. If these reflections appeared however to cause no uneasiness to ministers, yet a domestic source of just anxiety which they could not surmount, presented itself in the fixed and unconquerable alienation of the king. In vain did they endeavour to insinuate themselves into his personal favour. He received with formality and coldness, all their advances; allowed them to dictate measures; gave them audiences, signed papers, and complied with their advice: but, he neither admitted them to his confidence, nor ceased to consider them as objects of his individual aversion. The consciousness of this sentiment existing in the royal bosom, which sunk deep into Fox's mind, naturally impelled him to substitute other foundations, on which to construct, and to perpetuate his ministerial greatness.

No man who has enjoyed the opportunities of studying Fox's character, or of being informed respecting his political line of action, to which I have had access, can, however, doubt that he would have preferred gentleness before force, and conciliation in preference to harsher methods of confirming his power, if the means of accomplishing it had been open to him. He well knew how difficult it was to retain office in defiance of the sovereign; and he could not be ignorant that by his junction with Lord North, though he had stormed the cabinet, he had lost his popularity. All his original principles were monarchical, and even his ambition partook of the pliability of his nature. His very necessities rendered him ductile, and loudly called on him to bestow some attention on his private fortune. In fact, we may question whether a more complying minister, or one more disposed to have gratified his master in every legitimate object of royal desire, could have been found among his majesty's subjects. Mr. Pitt manifested by no means the same acquiescence, or the same suavity and ready submission, on a variety of occasions, when afterwards in office. He was, on the contrary, often intractable and pertinacious, as I know, even upon points painfully interesting to the king. But if George the Third did not regard him with affection, he at least considered him with esteem; and unfortunately for Fox, it was not easy to acquire the favour of the sovereign, except through the channel of his moral approbation. "*Hoc fonte derivata Clades.*" It was in vain that the secretary watched for a moment of weakness, of which he would no doubt have profited, to insinuate himself into the royal confidence. There existed no mistress to facilitate his approaches, to soften asperities, and to form the medium of reconciliation. Under George the First, the Duchess of Kendal, or the Countess of Darlington, would have performed that office for him, though not gratuitously; as Mrs. Howard, or Madame de Walmoden, would equally have done with George the Second.

Nor can we reasonably question on the other hand, that his majesty justly appreciated the secretary's character,

and was well aware that he would not prove more intractable or rigid while in office, than other men. But he did not choose to avail himself of such assistance. I know that some three or four years after the time of which I now speak, the king finding himself alone with the Duke of Queensberry, who had been one of the lords of his bedchamber ever since his accession to the crown, and with whom he was accustomed to converse unreservedly on many subjects; the discourse turned on the coalition ministry. "Sir," said the duke, "your majesty might safely have allowed Mr. Fox to remain in office, and you would have found in him every disposition to comply with your wishes. I can assert as an undoubted fact, that there was scarcely any proof of his personal devotion, or any sacrifice that he would not have made to acquire your favour." "He never said as much to me," answered the king. "No, sir," replied the duke, "assuredly he did not, because your majesty never gave him any encouragement to venture on taking such a step." George the Third, during the eight or nine months of his captivity, only looked to emancipation, and never attempted to gain or to conciliate his ministerial jailors.

Meanwhile emerging, as the duties of his high office compelled him, from the dissipation and society of Brookes's; Fox, during this brilliant, but transitory portion of his life, fulfilled with universal approbation, I might even say, admiration, all the essential, no less than the ostensible functions of secretary of state. At his house in Grafton-street, where he resided, he received and entertained the foreign ministers then resident in London from the various European courts, with distinguished *clat*. They, who were never weary of his conversation, respected his talents, while they admired the immense variety of his information on all diplomatic points. Delighted at the facility with which he wrote or conversed in French, an accomplishment not so general at that time, as it is now become; they were not less gratified by the liberal hospitality of his table, added to the noble amenity and frankness of his manners. Nor can it be sufficiently regretted, that a man so much formed to have

done honour, and to have rendered essential service to his country, as Fox; should, by the errors or imprudencies of his own conduct, have rendered himself obnoxious to his sovereign, and thus have excluded himself from office. We cannot reflect without concern, that in the course of a life prolonged to its fifty-eighth year, Fox sat only about nineteen months in the cabinet, taken altogether: while Pitt, who terminated his comparatively short career at forty-seven, passed almost his whole life after he attained to manhood, in the first employments; or rather, in the highest situation of state, that of prime minister. However we may dispute as to the superiority of *talents* in these two extraordinary and illustrious men, posterity will be at no loss to decide respecting the superiority of their *judgment*.

[August.] Pitt availing himself of this interval of political leisure, afforded him by the triumph of the *coalition*, and the recess of parliament, endeavoured to catch a hasty glimpse of the continent, which he had scarcely ever before visited. As if he foresaw that no other occasion would ever again present itself for the gratification of his curiosity, he crossed over to Calais, and directed his course in the first instance, to Rheims. Lord Thurlow followed his example. Mr. George Rose, who had been one of the two secretaries of the treasury, when Pitt filled the post of chancellor of the exchequer; and who has since deservedly risen by his distinguished financial talents or services, to much higher official situations; accompanied Lord Thurlow. I met them by accident, at Antwerp. Pitt proceeding afterwards to Paris, was presented by our ambassador, the Duke of Manchester, to Louis the Sixteenth, at Fontainebleau, where the French court always passed a considerable portion of the Autumn. His name, and the fame of his distinguished abilities, which had preceded his appearance, disposed all to admire him: but the king, in compliance with the stupid *etiquette*, that interdicted him from speaking to foreigners, who were presented at court; when added to his natural shyness; did not, I believe, exchange one word with Pitt. The queen, whose superior energy of mind emancipated her

from such restraints, treated him with the utmost distinction. Marie Antoinette entered into conversation with him, as far as his cold manner, increased by an imperfect knowledge of the French language, would permit him to engage in discourse. "*Monsieur*," said she to him, on his retiring, with a manner even more expressive than the words, "*Je suis charmée de vous voir, et de vous avoir vue*." Pitt took care to return to London from his short excursion, in time to attend the meeting of parliament.

While the two leaders of ministry, and of opposition, were thus respectively occupied, the one in his official duties at home, and the other on the continent; the king became a prey to habitual dejection. Throughout all the troubles of his reign, when Wilkes and when "*Junius*" excited disaffection among his subjects, as well as during the most distressful periods of the American war; or when the capital exhibited scenes of outrage and of popular violence; he had maintained a serene countenance, and manifested an unshaken firmness. But his fortitude sunk under the bondage to which the *coalition* had subjected him. His natural equality of temper, suavity of manners, and cheerfulness of deportment, forsaking him in a great measure, he became silent, thoughtful, taciturn, and uncommunicative. Sometimes, when he resided at Windsor, mounting his horse, accompanied by an equerry and a single footman; after riding ten or twelve miles, scarcely opening his lips, he would dismount in order to inspect his hounds, or to view his farming improvements: then getting on horseback again, he returned back to the queen's lodge in the same pensive or disconsolate manner. From time to time, he admitted Mr. Jenkinson and Lord Thurlow, both of whom were privy councillors, to pay their respects to him. He even repeated to the latter of those distinguished persons, his wish already expressed, of going over to his electoral dominions for a few months; and abandoning to the ministers, the power of which they had got possession. But Lord Thurlow after again dissuading him from having recourse to any strong or violent expedients for procuring present emancipation; exhorted him to wait for a favour-

able occasion, which Fox's impetuosity or imprudence would probably furnish, to liberate himself from the yoke of the *coalition*. Time soon presented the propitious moment for putting this advice into execution.

[September.] His majesty remaining inflexible in his resolution not to create any *British* peers on the ministerial recommendation, they contented themselves with tendering him a list of eight or nine *Irish* peerages. However reluctantly, he yet consented to exercise this act of the prerogative, Nearly about the same time, the definitive treaties of peace were concluded with France and Spain; while David Hartley, who had been sent to Paris expressly for the purpose, signed another treaty with America. Hartley, who was member for Hull, though destitute of any personal recommendations of manner, possessed some talent, with unsullied probity, added to indefatigable perseverance and labour. His sight, which was very defective, compelled him always to wear spectacles. The Rockingham party contained not among them a more zealous adherent; but in parliament, the intolerable length, when increased by the dulness of his speeches, rendered him an absolute nuisance, even to his own friends. His rising always operated like a dinner bell. One day, that he had thus wearied out the patience of his audience; having nearly cleared a very full house, which was reduced from three hundred to about eighty persons, half asleep; just at a time when he was expected to close, he unexpectedly moved that the Riot Act should be read, as a document necessary to elucidate, or to prove, some of his foregoing assertions. Burke, who sat close by him, and who wishing to speak to the question under discussion, which was a part of the *budget*, had been bursting with impatience for more than an hour and a half; finding himself so cruelly disappointed, bounced up, exclaiming, while he laid hold of Hartley by the coat, "The Riot Act! My dear friend, the Riot Act! to what purpose! don't you see that the mob is already completely dispersed? You have not twenty hearers." The sarcastic wit of this remark, in the state of the house,

which presented to the view only empty benches; when increased by the manner and tone of despair, in which Burke uttered it; convulsed every person present except Hartley, who never changed countenance, and insisted on the Riot Act being read by one of the clerks. Lord North himself recounted this story to Sir John Macpherson, from whom I received it.

I have heard the late Earl of Liverpool, then Mr. Jenkinson, say, that Hartley having risen to speak, about five o'clock, during the session of the year 1779, in the month of June, or of July: and it being generally understood that he would undoubtedly continue a long time on his legs, as he was to conclude with making a motion; Mr. Jenkinson profited of the occasion to breathe some country air. He walked therefore from the house to his residence in Parliament-street; from whence mounting his horse, he rode out to a place that he rented, some miles from town. There he dined, strolled about, and in the evening returned slowly to London. As it was then near nine o'clock; before he went down a second time to the House of Commons, he despatched a servant to Mrs. Bennet the housekeeper, requesting to be informed of the names of the principal persons who had spoken in the course of the debate, and likewise to know about what hour a division might probably be expected to take place. The footman brought back for answer, that Mr. Hartley continued still speaking, but was expected to close soon; and that no other person had yet risen except himself. In fact, when Mr. Jenkinson entered the house soon afterwards, Hartley remained exactly in the same place and attitude as he was near five hours before; regardless of the general impatience, or of the profound repose into which the majority of his hearers were sunk. However incredible this anecdote appears, I have related it without exaggeration.

[October.] Autumn produced universal tranquillity; a peace with Holland, followed the treaties made with France, Spain, and America. In India, hostilities had been long terminated with the Mharattas; and the death of Hyder Ally, the most formidable enemy with

whom we had to contend in the east, which took place in December, 1782, enabled us to continue the contest with France in that quarter of the world, till the arrival at Madras of the intelligence of a general pacification in Europe. I availed myself of a fortunate circumstance, to convey the first information of this event to India, and thereby stopped the farther effusion of blood. Lord Walsingham, who honoured me with his friendship, having in his possession two "Extraordinary Gazettes," issued on the 23d of January, 1783, gave me one of them; which Gazette I forwarded on the 25th of that month, by the common post, overland, through Vienna, Constantinople, Aleppo, and Bussora, to a friend at Madras. It contained the preliminaries of peace just signed at Paris, between Great Britain, France and Spain. The king's ministers, as well as the East India Company, were equally bound by every principle of humanity and policy, to have anticipated that Gazette. But Lord Sydney, then secretary of state for the department, having delayed (on account of the unsettled nature of the administration, which continued during many weeks in a species of suspension, after Lord Shelburne's resignation), to despatch the "Crocodile" frigate with the intelligence; and the court of directors remaining from the same cause, equally negligent or torpid; my letter reached Madras about the middle of the following month of June. Full six weeks elapsed, subsequent to that time, before any official information, either from the court of Versailles, from the British government, or from the East India House, arrived on the coast of Coromandel. Our position, at the moment when my account was received in that quarter of the globe, might be esteemed most critical, as we had formed the siege of Cuddalore, and were under hourly apprehension of a sally being made on the part of the enemy, whose force within the walls far exceeded the number of our own troops stationed in the trenches before the place. Under these circumstances, Lord Macartney, then governor of Madras, having despatched his secretary, Sir George Staunton, to Cuddalore, with the Gazette which my friend had laid

before him; Bussy, who commanded the French forces, recognised its authenticity, and consented to publish an immediate cessation of arms. When the account of so extraordinary a fact was received in London from Madras, early in 1784, together with the recognition of its beneficial results to the East India Company, a member of the court of directors, who then enjoyed great consideration in Leadenhall-street, impressed with a sense of the public benefits that had accrued from it, evinced a desire of procuring for me, as its author, some honorary mark of the company's satisfaction or gratitude. But on his mentioning the subject to the chairman and deputy chairman, they observed, that to thank me for sending out intelligence of the conclusion of peace, must seem to imply a tacit condemnation of their own delay in so long withholding, or rather, in neglecting to forward the information. The business remained, therefore, unnoticed; but I do not the less reflect upon it, as one of the most gratifying acts of my whole life.

Hyder Ally, who had raised himself, like Buonaparte, from the rank of a military officer in the service of his native prince, the rajah or sovereign of Mysore, to the possession of supreme power in that country, was, beyond all competition, the greatest man whom India had beheld, since the entry of Nadir Shaw into Dehli, or perhaps since the death of Aurung Zebe. It was twice the lot of Hyder, to overrun the Carnatic, and to penetrate to the gates of Madras. His first irruption, which took place in 1769, may even be said to have dictated the treaty of peace, concluded under the very walls of the city. Governor Du Pré, who then presided over the East India Company's affairs on the coast of Coromandel, held more than one interview with Hyder, while the negotiations were still pending, in order to adjust, or to accelerate the conditions. Insensibly, during these personal conferences, as their mutual distrust and distance wore off, the nabob put many questions to Du Pré, indicating equally the enlargement of his mind, and displaying the easy familiarity of his manners. One of the circumstances which most excited the English governor's

astonishment, was to see that Hyder had no eyebrows; nor, indeed, a single hair left on any part of his face. A man constantly attended near him, whose sole function and employment consisted in pulling out, with a pair of nippers, the first hair that made its appearance on the sultan's countenance. Hyder, perceiving the surprise which this fact occasioned in Du Pré, said to him, "I observe, that you wonder at my having no eyebrows, as well as at my attention in causing every hair that appears on my face, to be immediately eradicated. The reason I will explain to you. I am the Nabob of Mysore, and it forms an object of policy with me that my subjects should see no face in my dominions resembling the countenance of their sovereign." Du Pré assured Sir John Macpherson, to whom he related this anecdote, that he believed Hyder's practice proved him to possess a consummate knowledge of human nature, especially of his own subjects. "For," added he, "the impression which the nabob's physiognomy made upon myself, was not a little increased by its singularity." From the universal testimony of all those Europeans who had opportunities of knowing this extraordinary prince, it is unquestionable that his manners, voice, and deportment, were the most soft and ingratiating to be imagined, whenever he wished to please, or affected to be gracious and benign: but he was terrible, and often ferocious in his anger, like the Caliph Haroun-Alraschid, or like Peter the First of Russia. He died of abscesses, or cancers, in his loins, — probably the consequences of debauchery, — which carried him off before he attained to old age. After a war, which from its commencement at Lexington in 1775, had lasted near eight years, the world began to enjoy repose; but the efforts made by the *coalition* to consolidate their political power, soon produced at home the most violent convulsions, which terminated in their total downfall.

Two great legal characters finished their course nearly together, in the autumn of 1783. Dunning, in August; and Wallace in November. Both were eminent in their profession; but all the intellectual superiority lay on the side

of the former. Yet fortune had a greater share than merit or talents in elevating the one to the peerage, while the other failed of attaining to that eminence. If Lord North's administration had continued two or three years longer, and consequently, if Lord Shelburne had been excluded from office, their destiny might probably have been reversed. I have been assured, that a short time before Lord Ashburton's decease, these two distinguished lawyers finding themselves by accident in the same inn at Bagshot, — the one on his way down into Devonshire, and the other returning from thence to London, — both of them conscious that their recovery from the disorders under which they laboured was desperate, expressed a strong mutual wish to enjoy a last interview with each other. For that purpose, they were carried into the same apartment, laid down on two sofas nearly opposite, and remained together for a long time in conversation. They then parted, as men who could not hope to meet again in this world. By Wallace's decease, Lee became attorney-general, and Mansfield was replaced in his former situation of solicitor-general, which he had filled under Lord North's administration.

I passed a considerable part of the autumn with Lord Sackville, at Drayton in Northamptonshire. Though in his sixty-eighth year, he possessed activity of body, cheerfulness of temper, and the perfect possession of all his faculties. Drayton had formerly belonged to the Mordaunts, Earls of Peterborough; from whom it passed into the possession of Henry, Duke of Norfolk, by his marriage with Lady Mary Mordaunt, under the reign of William the Third. He did not, however, long retain it, having been divorced from the duchess, on account of a criminal connection which she carried on with Sir John Germain; and as the duke had no issue by her, Drayton reverted to the lady. Lord Sackville having, as it is well known, assumed the name of Germain, and having inherited the estate of Drayton, it was natural that I should inquire how he came to be called to that succession. He has frequently related to me the particulars, which I shall recount in his own words.

“Sir John Germain’s extraction,” said he, “which was uncertain, and variously reported, has given rise to much discussion. His reputed father bore arms, as a private soldier, in the life-guards of William the Second, Prince of Orange: but his mother, who possessed great personal charms, fame asserted to have been that prince’s mistress; and her son was believed to stand in a very close degree of consanguinity to King William the Third. Other circumstances tend to confirm this opinion. Sir John Germain inherited no paternal coat of arms; but he assumed, or rather used, as his seal and armorial bearing, a red cross: meaning thereby probably to imply, that his pretensions ascended higher than his ostensible birth. Even when, by the provisions of his widow, Lady Betty Germain’s will, I inherited Drayton, on the condition of assuming the *name* of Germain, no mention was made of the *arms*, as is customary in almost all similar cases. King William, with whom Sir John came over here from Holland, in 1688, unquestionably regarded him with distinguishing affection, and advanced him in life. He became a member of parliament, received the honour of knighthood, and various pecuniary grants or donations to a considerable amount, were conferred on him by that prince.

“Sir John Germain, who possessed a very handsome person, was always a distinguished favourite of the other sex. His connexion with the Duchess of Norfolk, finally procured him this place and estate, she having married him, after obtaining a divorce from her first husband. They lived together several years; but no children being left alive, and the title of Earl of Peterborough having reverted to a collateral branch of the Mordaunt family, she bequeathed to him, by her will, in the year 1705, the house and property of Drayton, which lay entirely in her own disposal. Sir John, who, though he was naturalized, and become by long residence in this country, in a great degree, an Englishman, retained, nevertheless, many of the habits of a native of Holland, attached himself much to my mother. She being the daughter of Marshal Colyear, brother to the first Earl of Portmore, who had

entered early into the Dutch service, and who was an old friend of Sir John Germain; he always called her his countrywoman, visited frequently at my father’s house, and was kindly received by the Duke and Duchess of Dorset. Finding himself in possession of a considerable landed property after the death of his wife, and desirous of transmitting it to his own descendants, but being destitute of any natural connexions, he meditated to engraft himself on some distinguished family of this kingdom. For the express purpose, while resident at Bristol Wells, on account of his health, he cast his eyes upon Lady Betty Berkeley, a daughter of the Earl of Berkeley; whose birth, character, and accomplishments, rendered her every way worthy of his choice. The marriage took place. She was, indeed, many years younger than Sir John; but as she possessed a superior understanding, added to the most correct deportment, she acquired great influence over him. Having been, herself, previously intimate with the Duchess of Dorset, the friendship between the two families became cemented by the alliance. Sir John Germain had several children by her, who all died young; and in the evening of his life became a martyr to the gout, as well as to other diseases, Lady Betty assiduously performed every duty of an affectionate wife, and of a careful nurse, about his person.

“A short time before his decease, which happened in the year 1718, having called her to his bedside; ‘Lady Betty,’ said he, ‘I have made you a very indifferent husband, and particularly of late years, when infirmities have rendered me a burden to myself: but I shall not be much longer troublesome to you. I advise you never again to marry an old man: but I strenuously exhort you to marry when I am gone, and I will endeavour to put it in your power. You have fulfilled every obligation towards me in an exemplary manner, and I wish to demonstrate my sense of your merits. I have therefore, by my will, bequeathed you this estate, which I received from my first wife; and which, as she gave to me, so I leave to you. I hope you will marry, and have children to inherit it. But if events should determine otherwise, or if

you should not have issue that survive you, it would give me pleasure to think, that Drayton descended after your decease to a younger son of my friend, the Duchess of Dorset.' In consequence of this wish, expressed by Sir John Germain on his death-bed, I now enjoy the estate, Lady Betty, though young when left a widow, and though she survived him above fifty years, never married a second time. Her friendship for my mother, always continued without diminution; and her respect for the desire manifested by her husband, induced her to fulfil his wishes, to the exclusion of any of her own relations."

While writing on this subject, I shall endeavour to throw into one point, some of the numerous particulars relative to his own family, which in the course of conversation I heard from Lord Sackville. They all may be said to hold, more or less, to English history. In order to give them more verity and accuracy, I shall, as nearly as I am able, present them in his own words.

"The Sackvilles," said he, "who came into England with the conqueror, and who derived their name from a small village of Low Normandy, have never branched in the lapse of more than seven hundred years. During the two last centuries, the family has produced three distinguished men; of whom the first was the lord treasurer Buckhurst, whom our great Elizabeth thought worthy to succeed Lord Burleigh in that high office, and whom James the First created Earl of Dorset. It would have been fortunate for the Scottish king, if he had presided longer in the councils of the crown; but he soon followed his royal mistress, and made way, after a short interval, for those favourites, Carr and Villiers, who covered James with disgrace. His grandson, Edward, Earl of Dorset, the friend and contemporary of Lord Herbert of Cherbury; but, better known by his duel with Lord Bruce, performed an eminent part under Charles the First. He accompanied that prince during the civil wars, and fought in most of the actions, from Edge Hill, down to Naseby. But like the virtuous Lord Falkland, he regretted and lamented the very advantages, to which he contributed by his sword. Many of his letters,

written between 1643 and 1646, which are preserved among the Dorset Papers; descriptive of the scenes of havoc then acting in every part of the kingdom, convey a high idea of his principles. His days were embittered and abbreviated by his royal master's tragical end, which he only survived about three years.

My grandfather, Charles, commonly called the witty Earl of Dorset, died about ten years before I was born, after having survived in a great degree his faculties. He was during his whole life, the patron of men of genius, and the dupe of women. Bountiful beyond measure to both, though he inherited not only the paternal estate of the Sackvilles, but likewise, that of the Cranfields, Earls of Middlesex, in right of his mother; yet at his decease, my father, then eighteen years of age, possessed so slender a fortune, that his guardians, when they sent him to travel on the continent, allowed him only eight hundred pounds a year, for his provision. Charles, Earl of Dorset, married three times; but only one of these marriages contributed either to his honour, or to his felicity. His first wife was the celebrated Countess of Falmouth, well known by her gallantries; the Miss *Bagot* of 'Grammont's Memoirs,' whom Dryden has designated as

'A teeming widow, but a barren wife.'

Happily she left him no issue; and in his second matrimonial connexion, he consulted not only his inclination, but his judgment, when he gave his hand to a daughter of the Earl of Northampton. He had then nearly attained his fiftieth year; and as he was only twenty-three at the time of Charles the Second's restoration, the excesses of that dissolute reign, in which Lord Dorset led the way, had already enfeebled his constitution. Strongly attached to the principles of civil liberty, he quitted James the Second, when that infatuated prince attempted to introduce popery; and conducted the Princess Anne of Denmark from her father's palace at Whitehall, to the coach which waited for her in St. James's Park, in order to convey her to Nottingham. While crossing over from

the palace to the park, by night, and in winter, one of her royal highness's shoes sticking fast in the mud, the accident threatened to impede her escape: but Lord Dorset immediately drawing off his white glove, put it on the princess's foot, and placed her safely in the carriage. To King William, my grandfather rendered himself not less acceptable, than he had been to Charles the Second; and I have always been assured that it only depended on himself, to have been raised to a dukedom under William's reign: but his wife's relations, the Comptons, treating the matter, when he mentioned it to them, with great indifference, he said, 'the Earldom of Dorset was quite good enough for him.' In fact, my father only attained to that dignity, near thirty years afterwards, under George the First.

"Extenuated by pleasures and indulgences, the Earl of Dorset sunk under a premature old age; though not as early as Rochester, Buckingham, and so many others of his contemporaries had done, including Charles the Second himself; all of whom fell victims to their immoderate pursuit of enjoyments. A few years before he died, he married a woman named Roche, of very obscure connexions, who held him in a sort of captivity down at Bath, where he expired at about sixty-nine. She suffered few persons to approach him during his last illness, or rather decay; and was supposed to have converted his weakness of mind, to her own objects of personal acquisition. He was indeed considered to be fallen into a state of such imbecility, as would render it necessary to appoint guardians, with a view to prevent his injuring the family estate: but the intention was nevertheless abandoned. You have no doubt heard, and it is a fact, that with a view of ascertaining whether Lord Dorset continued to be of a sane mind, *Prior*, whom he had patronized and always regarded with predilection, was sent down to Bath, by the family. Having obtained access to the earl, and conversed with him, *Prior* made his report in these words. 'Lord Dorset is certainly greatly declined in his understanding; but he *drivels* so much better sense even now, than any other man can *talk*, that you must not call me into

court, as a witness to prove him an idiot.'

"My father having lost his own mother, when very young, was brought up chiefly by the Dowager Countess of Northampton, his grandmother; who being particularly acceptable to Queen Mary, she commanded the countess always to bring her little grandson, Lord Buckhurst, to Kensington Palace, though at that time hardly four years of age; and he was allowed to amuse himself with a child's cart in the gallery. King William, like almost all Dutchmen, never failed to attend the tea-table, every evening. It happened that her majesty having one afternoon, by his desire, made tea, and waiting for the king's arrival, who was engaged on business in his cabinet, at the other extremity of the gallery; the boy hearing the queen express her impatience at the delay, ran away to the closet, dragging after him the cart. When he arrived at the door, he knocked; and the king asking 'Who is there?' 'Lord Buck,' answered he, 'And what does Lord Buck want with me?' replied his majesty. 'You must come to tea directly,' said he, 'the queen is waiting for you.' King William immediately laid down his pen, and opened the door; then taking the child in his arms, placed Lord Buckhurst in the cart, and seizing the pole, drew them both along the gallery, quite to the room in which were seated the queen, Lady Northampton, and the company. But no sooner had he entered the apartment, than, exhausted with the effort, which had forced the blood upon his lungs, and being naturally asthmatic, he threw himself into a chair, and for some minutes was incapable of uttering a word, breathing with the utmost difficulty. The Countess of Northampton, shocked at the consequences of her grandson's indiscretion, which threw the whole circle into great consternation, would have punished him: but the king interposed in his behalf; and the story is chiefly interesting, because, (as serving to show how kindly he could behave towards a troublesome child), it places that prince in a more amiable point of view, than he is commonly represented in history. Henry the Fourth of France, when playing with his own children,

could not have manifested more amenity, or good humour. The queen being accustomed to take Lord Buckhurst in her arms, and to caress him when he came to Kensington; his nurse, aware of the circumstance, gave him secretly a written paper, which she charged him to deliver privately to her majesty. He did so, without acquainting Lady Northampton, who being present, would have interposed to prevent him: but the queen insisted on perusing its contents. It contained a petition drawn up by the woman, in favour of her brother, then condemned to death for a capital crime. Queen Mary, touched with the incident, laid it before the king, who caused enquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case, with a view of extending mercy to the culprit. On examination, the crime, from its magnitude, not admitting of pardon, the queen, as the only alleviation left in her power to bestow, gave Lord Buckhurst a purse containing ten Jacobusses; enjoining him to present it to his nurse from herself, with the assurances of her concern at the impossibility that existed, of saving her brother's life."

"I was born," continued Lord Sackville, in the year 1716, in the Haymarket, where my father then resided; and received my name from George the First, who was my godfather, having honoured the ceremony of my baptism by his personal presence. One of the earliest circumstances which made an impression on my mind, was that of being carried, at five years of age, by the servants, to the gate of St. James's Palace, in order to see the great Duke of Marlborough, as he came out of court. He was then in a state of caducity; but still retained the vestiges of a most graceful figure, though he was obliged to be supported by a servant on each side, while the tears ran down his cheeks, just as he is drawn by Dr. Johnson, who says,

'From Marlborough's eyes, the tears of dotage flow.'

The populace cheered him, while passing through the crowd to enter his carriage. I have, however, heard my father assert, that the Duke of Marlborough by no

means fell into irrecoverable or settled dotage, as we commonly suppose; but manifested at times a sound understanding, till within a very short period of his decease; occasionally attending the privy council, and sometimes speaking in his official capacity, on points of public business, with his former ability.

"No man displayed greater zeal than my father, for the succession in the House of Brunswick. After Queen Anne's death in 1714, he was sent to Hanover; returned with the new king from Heren Hausen to England, in September of the same year; and had the honour to accompany George the First, in the coach which conveyed him on his landing, from Greenwich to London. Thirty-three years earlier, he had been a suitor for the hand of the queen, whom he then succeeded; having come over with that view, from Germany to this country, in 1681, by permission of his father, Ernest Augustus; but the proposition failed of success. On his return, riding a common post horse from London to Gravesend where he took shipping for Holland, the horse and the road being equally bad, he got a severe fall, and arrived at Gravesend, covered with mud. The king, who related this circumstance to Lord Dorset, as they came up together in the coach, recognised, and pointed out the spot where the misadventure befel him.

"When the intelligence of his decease, which took place near Osna-brugh, in the end of July, 1727, arrived in London; the cabinet having immediately met, thought proper to despatch the Duke of Dorset with the news to the Prince of Wales. He then resided at Kew, in a state of great alienation from the king; the two courts maintaining no communication. Some little time being indispensable, to enable my father to appear in a suitable manner before the new monarch, he sent forward the duchess his wife, in order to announce the event. She arrived at Kew, just as the prince, according to his invariable custom, having undressed himself after dinner, had laid down in bed. The duchess demanding permission to see him immediately, on business of the greatest importance, the servants acquainted the Princess of Wales with her

arrival; and the duchess, without a moment's hesitation, informed her royal highness, that George the First lay dead at Osnabrugh; that the cabinet had ordered her husband to be the bearer of the intelligence to his successor, and that the duke would follow her in a short time. She added, that not a moment should be lost in communicating so great an event to the prince, as the ministers wished him to come up to London that same evening, in order to summon a privy council, to issue a proclamation, and take other requisite measures, at the commencement of a new reign.

"To the propriety of all these steps, the princess assented; but at the same time informed the duchess, that she could not venture to enter her husband's room, as he had only just taken off his clothes, and composed himself to sleep. 'Besides,' added she, 'the prince will not give credit to the intelligence; but will exclaim that it is a fabrication, designed for the purpose of exposing him.' The duchess continued nevertheless to remonstrate with her royal highness, on the injurious consequences of losing time; and adding, that the Duke of Dorset would expect to find the prince not only apprised of it, but ready to accompany him to London; the Princess of Wales took off her shoes, opened the chamber door softly, and advanced up to the bedside, while my mother remained at the threshold, till she should be allowed to enter the apartment. As soon as the princess came near the bed, a voice from under the clothes cried out in German, 'Was is das?' 'I am come, sir,' answered she, 'to announce to you the death of the king, which has taken place in Germany.' 'That is one damned trick,' returned the prince, 'I do not believe one word of it.' 'Sir,' said the princess, 'it is most certain. The Duchess of Dorset has just brought the intelligence, and the duke will be here immediately. The ministers hope that you will repair to town, this very evening, as your presence there is indispensable.' Her royal highness then threw herself on her knees, to kiss the new king's hand; and beckoning to the Duchess of Dorset to advance, she came in likewise, knelt down, and assured him of the indisputable truth of

his father's decease. Convinced at length of the fact, he consented to get up and dress himself. The Duke of Dorset arriving in his coach and six, almost immediately afterwards, George the Second quitted Kew the same evening, for London." I return to the progress of public affairs.

[November.] When we reflect on the manner in which Fox had attained to power; as well as on the long, though ineffectual resistance made by the king; followed by his sullen resignation under a yoke which he found it impossible to elude or throw off;—when we consider these facts, it cannot excite surprise, that Fox should meditate the means of confirming and perpetuating his precarious tenure of office. He felt himself personally odious to the sovereign, whom he had too deeply offended, easily to obtain forgiveness. From that quarter therefore, he well knew that he might be undermined or subverted; but he could not hope to receive a cordial support. Unfortunately, he had likewise recently lost in a very considerable degree, the confidence and attachment of the people. So long as the American war lasted, he retained, in defiance of his private irregularities, their ardent affection. Of this sentiment, they gave him many proofs: particularly after his duel with Mr. Adam, when the wound which he received, exciting apprehensions for his life, the populace surrounded his lodgings, with testimonies of clamorous anxiety, as well as of corresponding resentment against his ministerial and personal opponents.

Since that time, the inhabitants of Westminster manifesting the same partiality, had elected him one of their representatives in parliament; a situation which enabled him not only to defend their liberties in the House of Commons, but conferred likewise the means of convoking, haranguing, and propelling them in tumultuary assemblies, convened for the express purpose in Westminster Hall. To a man of Fox's energy and talents, the additional facility of thus presiding in a species of mob, at the very door of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as at a very inconsiderable distance from the royal residence, doubled his consequence; and might be

said to render him a tribune of the people, in the most literal sense of the word, nearly as that office was exercised, in ancient Rome, previous to the subversion of the commonwealth. Nor had his popularity suffered at all in the general estimation, by his acceptance of office under Lord Rockingham; though the fallacy and delusion of many of his promises or assertions, had become sufficiently manifest, even during his short stay in the cabinet under that administration. On the motives, and on the propriety or necessity, of his resignation, after Lord Shelburne's elevation to the head of the treasury, mankind seemed indeed divided; some applauding it, as an act of magnanimous public virtue, renunciation, and self-devotion; while others beheld in it only personal rivalry, enmity, and resentment.

But, relative to his junction with his present colleague Lord North, the suffrages of the world, from the highest, down to the lowest classes, united to reprobate it in a greater or in a less degree. And I have always thought that Fox himself, in his impatience to regain office, miscalculated, or did not sufficiently appreciate, the operation on the public mind, of his conduct; in thus taking to his bosom in March, 1783, the very minister, on whose head, in March, 1782, he had invoked the utmost vengeance of an offended and ruined nation. Some longer interval of time was required, to reconcile men to such an apparent dereliction of principle, and so total a sacrifice of decorum, at the shrine of ambition. Here the transmutation had been so rapid, as not only to shock the most ordinary understanding; but, even to impress with secret concern or disgust, many of those who, nevertheless, affected to justify, and to support the measure. Pope says,

“Lust, through some certain strainers well refin’d,
Is gentle love, and charms all female kind.”

But it must pass through those refiners, and leave its dross behind, or conceal it, before love can charm, or challenge respect. I have heard Colonel Macalister, late governor of the island of Penang in the East Indies, frequently assert, that there existed in the town of

that colony, a receptacle or space of ground, surrounded by walls, into which was commonly thrown every species of corrupted and putrefied substance. In a hot climate, the process from dissolution to revivification, we know, is very quick. Maggots in immense numbers, of a prodigious size, were speedily generated or produced from this filth; which the Chinese inhabitants of the settlement, who possessed no means of regular subsistence, and who therefore were not fastidious about their diet, used to collect with rakes, from off the heaps of carcasses, and to devour immediately, after frying them in *ghee*, or melted butter. Col. Macalister indeed added, that the Chinese who used such aliments, became subject to cutaneous and leprous diseases of the most inveterate kind. We perceive, however, that all animal and vegetable substances perpetually change their forms; and disgusting as this recital may be, that sentiment only arises from the rapidity of the metamorphosis. Precisely of the same kind, in a political sense, appeared the coalition between Lord North and Fox; a transformation, which being consummated in the space of a few hours, was then imposed upon the House of Commons and the nation. But the English, indignant at such a compact, which revolted their moral feelings, rejected in general with abhorrence, the dish served up to them, and dismissed the state cooks who had prepared it for the country.

Well aware as Fox was therefore, that though he had a second time forced his way into high employment, yet he neither enjoyed the favour of the crown, nor any longer possessed the affection of the people in general; it was natural he should look to some other quarter, for permanent support. In the two Houses of Parliament, where he commanded a decided majority, he beheld the foundation on which he might construct a citadel, unassailable, as he conceived, either by the sovereign or by the nation. India, which presented the materials for his edifice, seemed to invite his exertions to re-model that vast empire, convulsed and half subverted by internal discord or corruption, added to external hostilities. Burke, whose friend or relation of the same name, William Burke, was already

stationed in the east, as agent with the Rajah of Tanjore; and who had, himself, taken a most active part in all the parliamentary discussions arising out of the reports of the secret and select committees, during the two preceding sessions; aspired with equal ardour, to second Fox in this great undertaking. It had even been announced from the throne, when the king terminated the sitting of parliament, in the preceding month of July, that India would form the first object of their deliberations, on their again meeting for business.

During the course of the autumn, Fox and Burke, therefore, aided by the law officers of the crown, drew up, and prepared the memorable *bill*, which it was intended to introduce, as soon as the session should commence in November. They communicated all the heads and outlines of it, to Lord North; with whom, indeed, as being in his department, the measure ought strictly to have originated: but who was induced in this instance, as in many other cases, to allow the energies of his colleague, added to the superior information possessed by Burke on the subject, to supplant, and in some measure to supersede him in his official functions. The *bill*, thus far organized, and having been generally approved in the cabinet, was then submitted to the king, for his private perusal and sanction; accompanied with becoming expressions on their part, of the wish and desire entertained by ministers, to accommodate it to his majesty's ideas upon every point, before it should be brought into parliament. Unable of himself, by the powers of his own mind, without some assistance, to form a competent judgment upon its complicated provisions, operation, and general results, it was understood and believed that the king had early thought proper to lay it confidentially before Lord Thurlow; desiring at the same time to know his legal opinion respecting its nature. Common rumour added, that the opinion delivered by Lord Thurlow, represented it as calculated to render ministers independent of the crown; and as containing many clauses injurious to, or nearly subversive of, the British Constitution itself: but that his majesty was advised to wait for its more complete development, before he ex-

pressed any disapprobation, or attempted any resistance. Such might be considered the general state and aspect of things in the first days of November, when a curious incident, which unexpectedly took place at St. James's, and which excited no little speculation, seemed to show that the ground on which the ministry stood, was hollow and treacherous.

Sir Eyre Coote, who long commanded the armies of the East India Company, on the Coast of Coromandel, with distinguished reputation, and whose name is immortalized in the modern history of Asia; after repulsing Hyder Ally, and rescuing the Carnatic, expired at Madras, worn out and extenuated by disease, on the 26th of April, 1783; having survived his antagonist Hyder, scarcely five months. The intelligence of his decease, which was transmitted overland, reached Leadenhall-street, early in November. No sooner had it been communicated to Fox, than he immediately destined the ribband of the order of the *Bath*, which became vacant on Sir Eyre's death, for one of his intimate friends, Mr. Bielby Thompson. This gentleman, who possessed a very fine estate in Yorkshire, at Wetherby Grange, near the town of that name; sat at the time in parliament, as a member for Thirske in the county of York. Fox, after conferring on the subject, with the Duke of Portland and Lord North, whom he acquainted with his intentions, repaired to St. James's; where having gone into the closet, he announced to the king, the event that had taken place in India. He then mentioned Mr. Thompson, as the person whom he wished, on the part of ministers, to recommend for the vacant ribband; and his majesty in answer, seems to have expressed that species of acquiescence, more probably tacit than couched in precise words, which the secretary at once interpreted, whether judiciously or not, to constitute full compliance. Without waiting therefore, for any more explicit declaration from the king on the subject, as prudence seemed to dictate, Fox informed Mr. Thompson, of his having received the royal assent; and added, that the investiture would take place at the next levee. Directions were accordingly issued to Norroy,

King of Arms, and the proper officers belonging to the Herald's College, to attend at St. James's for the purpose. The circumstance being publicly known, Mr. Thompson was felicitated by anticipation, on the honour destined for him : but the sequel proved that Fox had either miscalculated or misunderstood, the whole transaction.

On the day fixed, his majesty went to St. James's at the usual hour, to prepare for the levee. After he had finished dressing, he sent out the groom of the bed chamber in waiting, as was his frequent custom, to bring him information relative to the number of persons who were arrived. The gentleman returning, acquainted the king, that besides a great crowd come to attend the levee, the officers of the *Bath* stood likewise without, ready for the investiture. With some surprise marked in his countenance, the king asked, what investiture he meant ? To which question he replied, not without hesitation, that he understood it was intended to confer the order of the *Bath* on Mr. Bielby Thompson who was attending there in person for that express purpose. His majesty made no answer ; and immediately afterwards, the Duke of Portland entering, went into the closet. In the course of his audience, the king observed to him, that no *official* account having been as yet received from India, of Sir Eyre Coote's death ; however authentic the information of that event, transmitted from Madras, might prove ; and his ribband, together with the other insignia of the order, not having been hitherto delivered back to himself ; he apprehended it would be informal to fill up the vacancy, till those points were previously ascertained and executed. The duke, taken by surprise, after attempting respectfully to bring his majesty to another way of thinking, withdrew ; and finding Mr. Fox in the next room, communicated to him this most unexpected and mortifying piece of information.

The secretary, equally astonished, as well as chagrined, instantly went in, when a long conversation took place between him and the sovereign. In its progress, Fox stated that having some days preceding, laid the business before his majesty ; and conceiving that he had

obtained his royal approbation and consent to confer on Mr. Thompson the vacant red ribband, it had been so signified to that gentleman ; who, together with the proper officers, were then waiting without, in readiness for the ceremony. He added, that in point of fact, no possible doubt could be entertained of Sir Eyre Coote's death ; and that a disappointment, after the preparations and publicity of the affair, could not fail to be attended with very unpleasant consequences to administration, in the general opinion. To all these arguments and expostulations, the king, after alleging his own reasons, remained inflexible. Fox therefore quitting the closet, returned to his colleagues, various of whom, assembled in the outer room, were waiting under considerable anxiety, and imparted to them the unsuccessful result of his audience. No little confusion ensued among them. Mr. Thompson, apprised of the mortifying fact, returned home. The officers of the *Bath*, ordered to withdraw, were acquainted that the ceremony expected, would not take place on that day. Every person present formed his own comments or conjectures respecting the scene which had just passed under his eyes ; and the old courtiers did not fail to draw inferences from it highly adverse to the duration of ministers. It was obvious that the king, who felt no disposition to oblige them, had got possession of the advantage ground in the contest ; whereas Fox had acted with some degree of indiscretion, as well as precipitation, in presuming upon an assent, rather implied or assumed, than unequivocally expressed. Many men considered the whole proceeding as a thing concerted, and the result of deeper causes than were apparent to common observers. By exposing the administration to ridicule, as well as to mortification, it unquestionably served to prepare the public mind for some approaching convulsion or alteration in the government.

If the business of Sir Eyre Coote's ribband was attended with these unpleasant results to the ministry, they received on the other hand, just at this time, a prodigious accession of strength and consideration, from the avowed junction of the Prince of Wales : who having

attained his twenty-first year in the preceding month of August, had recently established his court and residence at Carlton House. Nature had bestowed uncommon graces on his figure and person: nor were his manners less highly distinguished than his birth. Probably James, Duke of Monmouth, son of Charles the Second, did not excel him in all these bodily accomplishments. Like the princes of the House of Brunswick, he manifested an early tendency to become corpulent; nor did he, like George the Third, repress that disposition by abstinence or renunciations. Convivial, as well as social in his temper, destitute of all reserve, and affable even to familiarity in his reception of every person who had the honour to approach him, he presented in these respects, a contrast to the shy, correct, and distant manners of the king, his father. Endowed with all the aptitudes to profit of instruction, his mind had been cultivated with great care; and he was probably the only prince in Europe, heir to a powerful monarchy, competent to peruse the Greek, as well as the Roman poets and historians, in their own language. Capable of warm and steady friendship, he possessed a heart not less susceptible of love, and alive to the impressions, as well as to the seduction, of female charms. Humane and compassionate, his purse was open to every application of distress; nor was it ever shut against genius or merit. Even if these virtues were mingled with considerable alloy, yet his facility, his ardent pursuit of pleasure, and his inattention to economy, all might derive some apology from his youth, and the elevation on which he stood; circumstances that necessarily exposed him to great, as well as corresponding temptations of every kind.

Nor ought we, if we candidly examine the subject, to feel either surprise, or any degree of moral disapprobation, at the predilection and preference which he had imbibed, and which he openly manifested, for an administration odious to his father. When he looked back on the twenty-three years of George the Third's reign, he beheld little matter of admiration, though ample reason for regret. At the peace of 1763, Lord Bute

had sacrificed or restored to France and Spain, almost all the acquisitions of Pitt. Wilkes and "Junius," aided by Churchill, had covered with opprobrium, or overwhelmed with ridicule, almost all the ministers employed between the treaty of Fontainebleau, and the commencement of the American war: nor had the sovereign himself escaped their severe animadversions on his personal conduct and government. In the gulf of the American contest, the treasures of England had been expended, her navy disgraced, her commerce nearly destroyed, her public burthens accumulated, her national debt immensely augmented, her armies defeated or made prisoners, and we had finally lost a vast empire beyond the Atlantic. Precisely as this calamitous consummation took place, the Prince of Wales, emerging from the restraint under which he had been hitherto held, made his appearance on the theatre of public life, and emancipated himself from parental superintendence or control. It was not merely natural, but almost unavoidable, that he should view those events through the optics and representations of Fox and Burke, rather than through any other medium. Neither George the Second, nor Frederick his son, could plead the same apology, or exhibit such valid causes to justify enlisting, as they respectively did, under the party adverse to the measures of the crown. Fox and his friends, who well knew how to improve these favourable circumstances, contrived to effect a deep, as well as a permanent impression on the affections, no less than on the understanding, of the heir apparent.

[11th November.] The session now commenced;—a session rendered conspicuous beyond any other of the long reign of George the Third, by the magnitude, singularity, and importance of its events; unless we should except from this remark, the parliament that met in November, 1788, on the king's memorable malady. A species of ostensible unanimity, like the calm that sometimes precedes the storm, characterised its opening; Mr. Pitt concurring warmly in the address to the throne, moved by administration, for approving the definitive treaties signed with France, Spain,

and America: though he did not fail to remark with indignant asperity, on the inconsistency of thanking the crown for merely consummating the very work, of which he and his colleagues had laid all the foundations; in consequence of conferring which national benefit they had been driven from office. "Yet," concluded he, "if the measures which ministers mean to propose, should meet my ideas, and appear to me salutary in their nature, I will not endeavour to defeat them by an ignoble opposition; but I will on the contrary give them my best support." Fox, with much ingenuity, endeavoured to demonstrate to the house, that the definitive treaties, far from being servile transcripts of the preliminaries, were, on the contrary, materially altered in favour of this country. And with a view to prove his assertion, he particularised three articles, on each of which, as he asserted, important ameliorations had taken place. These were, first, relative to the condition of the British inhabitants of the Island of Tobago; secondly, an accurate definition of the geographical limits, within which the gum trade on the coast of Africa, might in future be carried on; and lastly, the precise boundaries affixed to the possession of our allies in the East Indies. I own, however, that the aggregate merit of these concessions, or rather alterations, did not appear to me entitled to much encomium. They seemed to be rather inaccuracies or inadvertencies, than defects; and were such blemishes, as every administration must equally have perceived and remedied after the lapse of a few months.

Pitt made little answer to the secretary of state's speech, in the progress of which, he had announced his intention of bringing forward almost immediately, his plan for the new government of India. But Governor Johnstone, with the warmth, not to say violence, which characterised every sentiment that usually fell from his lips; claimed for Mr. Hastings, all the merit of expelling Tippo Sultan from the Carnatic, as well as of effecting a peace with the Mharatta empire: — Services, which, if they were justly due to the ability or wisdom of the governor general, as Johnstone asserted, might have challenged higher

testimonies of national or parliamentary approbation, than Fox's boasted improvements contained in the definitive treaty made with France. Johnstone concluded by warning the ministers, not to enforce any plans for the administration of India, without previously consulting the persons, who, from local knowledge and experience, knew the remedies most applicable to the disorders of those remote and valuable possessions. The treasury bench observed a profound silence, and the house soon afterwards broke up; all men looking forward with anxiety to the great measure now announced from ministerial authority, and of which the leading features were already known by common report, to be of the most vigorous, as well as affirmative nature. The celebrated "East India Bill" followed, after the interval of a few days. It was natural to suppose that Lord North, within whose department lay all regulation of our concerns in that quarter of the globe, would of course open the measure officially to the house. But instead of so doing, he absented himself on account of indisposition, leaving Fox to perform the task; — a line of conduct, which, whether it arose from real necessity, or whether it was preconcerted, operated very disadvantageously on the minds of many individuals attached to Lord North, who had hitherto supported the *coalition*. They beheld themselves in fact, completely abandoned by their ancient leader; who seemed to have delivered up himself, his followers, his sovereign, and his political principles, to the uncontrolled dominion of his new associates, Fox and Burke.

[18th November.] I scarcely ever remember, during the time that I sat in parliament, a day on which public expectation was wound up to a higher pitch, than when Fox opened his bill. He did it in the most able and masterly manner, detailing with perspicuity, in language equally lucid and persuasive, the accumulated embarrassments, abuses, and mal-administration, which had necessitated the adoption of a measure of vigour, for the extrication of the East India Company. Having stated the grievances, among which he did not omit Hastings's ambitious, profuse, and oppressive policy, as the leading source

of the calamities under which India laboured; and having declared that nothing except a total change of the ancient system, could effect any real benefit, he proceeded to unfold his gigantic plan. "My intention is," said he, "to propose the formation of a board, consisting of seven individuals, invested with power to appoint, as well as to displace, all officers throughout Indostan; and under whose authority, the whole government or administration of our extensive possessions in the east, shall be placed. My next proposition will be for the establishment of an assistant or subordinate board, to be composed of eight persons; to whose superintendence shall be submitted all the commercial concerns of the East India Company. But the latter board is designed to be subject to the absolute control of the seven first named commissioners; who, as well as the others, are to hold their sittings here in England." — "I mean that parliament shall in the present instance, name all the commissioners; and I intend their duration to be for the term of three, or of five years, which time will enable us to form an estimate of the efficacy and utility of the institution. If experience shall prove it to be beneficial, I would then give to the king the power of filling up all future vacancies among the superior commissioners. To the court of proprietors would be left the right of nomination at the inferior board."

When he had thus developed the outlines of his proposed *bill*, and endeavoured to demonstrate its salutary operation, if adopted; at the same time anticipating and replying to such objections as he conceived, might be made to it, he proceeded. "The situation of the country," observed he, "demands of a minister, not only vigorous measures, but even a degree of risk, and superiority to personal considerations of danger. This is not a moment, in which a secretary of state can remain idle. Those who prefer indulgence before application, may retire to private life. My office calls for exertion." Then reverting to his coalition with Lord North, he assured the house, that no material difference of opinion had arisen between him and his noble colleague, during the past summer. The experiment of a mutual ob-

livion of past animosities, and a cordial co-operation for the benefit of their country, had fully succeeded. "On the present occasion I lament, indeed," added he, "that illness and infirmity should deprive me of the great abilities possessed by that noble person; but I am authorised to declare, that we perfectly coincide in sentiment respecting the subject now before parliament; and as the bill must demand a certain time for its discussion, I trust I may still promise myself the benefit of his powerful support." As the strongest proof of Lord North's acquiescence in, and approbation of the measure, Colonel North, his eldest son, seconded Fox's motion.

All eyes were then directed towards Pitt, who instantly rising, sarcastically remarked, that although Lord North was indisposed, yet he did not conceive any material impediment to public affairs would result from it; as the secretary of state had demonstrated how competent he was to perform, not only his own share of parliamentary business, but the duties of his colleague likewise. Relative to the bill now brought forward he should suspend his judgment till it came fully before the house; adding, "Enormous abuses have been, no doubt, committed in the management of East India affairs. And enormous must they be, if they can justify a measure, which at once abrogates all the ancient charters or privileges granted to the company since its first existence." — "Is it not the avowed principle of the bill just announced, to place the whole power over our East India dominions, in the hands of seven individuals, who will derive their immediate appointment from the minister himself? In that minister will centre therefore prospectively, the immense patronage of those rich and extensive provinces. I am ready, as far as regards my own opinion, thus early to declare, that the whole system of the secretary of state appears to be absolute despotism on one side; and on the other, the most gross corruption." These severe animadversions, however just they might be in themselves, could not however arrest the progress of the measure, which proceeded with unexampled rapidity through the lower house of parliament.

It is no longer possible, after the lapse of above thirty years, to deceive either ourselves or mankind, relative to the nature, provisions, and effects of the *bill* in question. Its most determined enemies cannot dispute the energy, vigour, and decision, which breathed through every clause; nor will candid men refuse to allow the beneficial tendency of many of its regulations. But neither can the friends of Fox, however they may idolize his memory, deny the unwarrantable spirit of ambition, rapacity, and confiscation, by which it was equally distinguished in its leading features. The instant seizure of all the effects, papers, and possessions of a great chartered company; the total extinction of the court of directors, who had so long conducted its affairs; and the substitution of two new boards, named by the ministry, through the medium of parliament for the future government of India—these measures, however their necessity might apparently be demonstrated, seemed rather revolutionary subversions of property by arbitrary authority, than suited to the mild, moderate, and equitable spirit of the British Constitution. Other features of the *bill* appeared still more open to objection, since they evidently vested in administration, and therefore in Fox, as the ministerial leader, a power independent of the sovereign. Such, in particular, might be esteemed the clause, which ultimately extended the duration of the act, to *four* years; a term exceeding the possible period to which the existence of the House of Commons then sitting, could be protracted, they having already entered on their fourth session.

Many other regulations, growing out of the *bill*, or connected with the measure, excited just alarm. Even in the subsequent selection of the seven commissioners, who were to be appointed for the future administration of the East India Company's affairs at home and abroad, Fox's ascendant over his colleague was clearly defined: Lord Fitzwilliam, as the personal representative of the deceased Marquis of Rockingham, being placed at the head of the board; while Mr. Frederick Montagu, another most respectable adherent of the same political party, stood second in the list.

Colonel North, Viscount Lewisham, and Sir Gilbert Eliott, the three next commissioners, represented Lord North's interest and connexions. No division was attempted on any of these names, but I will remember the general laughter excited through the opposition ranks, when Colonel North was proposed. Indeed, Fox was so well aware of the sneers or comments to which that nomination would give rise, that he anticipated them in his speech on the occasion. But, in order to secure at once the majority of voices, together with the efficient control of the board itself; Sir Henry Fletcher, one of the representatives for the county of Cumberland, who in the year preceding had been raised to the dignity of a baronet, by the Marquis of Rockingham; and Mr. Robert Gregory, member for Rochester, were added to the number. Both these last named gentlemen, well known for their devoted attachment to Fox, and possessing seats in the House of Commons; having likewise in their own persons, recently and repeatedly filled the highest situations in the East India direction; it was obvious, must be resorted to as guides, on account of their local knowledge and experience in the company's concerns. No measures, it must be owned, could have been more ably concerted, for bringing under ministerial influence, and for permanently retaining under their subjection, the immense patronage, and all the sources of power, or of emolument, connected with India: while, on the other hand, it was well understood, that the first employments, civil and military, from the post of governor-general of Bengal, or commander-in-chief at Calcutta, down to the seats in council at Madras and at Bombay, were already promised or filled up, principally with members of parliament, distinguished for their adherence to administration. The names of the individuals destined for these high situations, became circulated in every company; and as many of them were better known among the club at Brookes's, than in Leadenhall-street; the consciousness of all India being speedily subjected to their rapacious hands, by no means tended to reconcile or to tranquillize the public mind.

[20th November.] Happily for the British Constitution, the activity and energy of opposition, seemed to keep pace with the bold policy and ambition of the secretary. Mr. William Grenville, then member for the town of Buckingham, and youngest of three brothers, who have all filled with distinction some of the highest employments of state, under the reign of George the Third; came eminently forward on the present momentous occasion. In a speech of great length, and greater ability, he gave promise of those vigorous powers of mind, which he has since unfolded in the upper House of Parliament, both in, and out of office. He wanted, indeed, the commanding tone, the majesty, and all the captivating rotundity, as well as splendour of Pitt's eloquence; but, in solidity of argument, in depth of thought, and the qualities that constitute a statesman, he might be thought to equal his distinguished relation. Having pointed out in the most convincing terms, the rapacity, despotism, and personal aggrandisement, which lay concealed behind the ostensible regulations of reform, in Fox's bill;—having endeavoured to unmask the attempt made to hoodwink and deceive the house, by nominating commissioners who would look only to the minister, and not to the sovereign, for the duration of their power;—he demanded, “By whom has a plan so pregnant with ruin to the Constitution, been originated and matured?—By the very man, whose voice has during many years been loudest in declaring, that the influence of the crown is excessive, and big with danger to the liberties of the country.” In language more measured, and destitute of classic ornament, but, not less calculated by its very brevity to impress his audience, Jenkinson stated the measure projected, “as setting up within the realm, a species of executive authority, which would be independent of all control on the part of the sovereign.” Nor did he fail to expose and to denounce the audacious spirit of legislation, which could propose a plan so subversive of every principle on which rest the liberties of England. Two individuals who have risen in our time to the highest honours and dignities of the bar, Scott and Erskine, both, I believe,

first presented themselves on that evening, to the notice of the house; but, on opposite sides: the former attacking, the latter defending, Fox's bill. Scarcely any impression of the speech pronounced by Scott, remains on my mind or memory, except a general idea of the calmness and candour which characterized it. One only sentiment has survived in my recollection, when he strikingly observed, that, “though ministers, by the words which they had put into his majesty's mouth, at the opening of the session, had called upon parliament to *deliberate*; yet it was now obvious, that instead of *consulting* on the affairs of India, the secretary of state had only convoked them for the purpose of *decision*.”

Fox, in his reply, while he treated Scott with great marks of consideration, and even of respect for his talents, as well as for the temperate mode in which he had delivered his opinions, exhausted on Jenkinson the severest epithets of reproach. “I well anticipated,” exclaimed he, “long before they were uttered, the observations which would proceed from that quarter. When I first heard the doctrine broached, of *separating the crown from its ministers, and treating them as divided interests*, I instantly foresaw who would take the lead on the present evening. Such doctrines could originate from no other individual. When the measures of government call for censure or punishment, then, indeed, I admit, ministers are solely responsible: but in almost every other point of view nothing can be more invidious or false than to make such a distinction.” Pitt, notwithstanding, who doubtless already knew the ground, pressed the secretary of state upon this tender subject with redoubled force. Having remarked on the inconsistency and contradiction of Fox's assertions respecting the unity of the sovereign and his ministers: “We hope indeed,” added he, “that they do materially differ. Whenever administration passes the limits of justice and of moderation, we trust that we shall always be able clearly to *distinguish the minister from the sovereign*. The secretary has exerted much ingenuity in attempting to conciliate and blend two powers, which are in themselves dis-

unct. I can, however, discover no reason for his introducing the present bill at so early a period of the session, and pressing it forward through the house, without allowing it a full discussion, except the design of settling *ministers* in the enjoyment of unlimited and absolute power." It was evident by these expressions, how imprudently Fox had acted in bringing forward a measure, which, besides its rapacious features, and its arbitrary spirit, enabled his opponents to accuse him, not without good reasons, of labouring to build up his own greatness, and to cement his own power, at the expense of the prince whom he served. He thus opened with his own hands the political abyss in which he was eventually swallowed up. So blind is ambition, unless regulated and restrained by judgment as well as moderation! Irritated at the motives imputed by Pitt and his friends, to administration, in framing the East India Bill, Burke rose towards the close of the debate, rather to indulge his spleen, and to vent his anger, than to apply to Pitt's arguments the touchstone of reason. "Those arguments," he said, "came, not from the head, but from the heart; and therefore neither merited, nor were capable of receiving any answer. The ministerial opponents knew their own base motives, for which reason they attributed to others, the feelings by which they were themselves animated." No division, however, as yet took place, and the bill proceeded forward with unexampled rapidity; while every other topic of conversation throughout the metropolis, and I might almost say, throughout the kingdom, was suspended in the contemplation of this new, as well as comprehensive measure.

[27th November.] Both sides, meanwhile, prepared for the greatest exertions, and it was evident that ministers, secure of a decided majority in each House of Parliament, dreaded nothing except delay. But the heads of opposition had already found effectual means to inform the sovereign of his danger, and to rouse him to resistance, though its effects were not immediately perceptible. Fox, confident in the superiority of his numbers, which circumstance he thought he had

well ascertained; and instructed by all past experience since the period of the revolution of 1688, that no British sovereign could venture to oppose himself personally against the representatives of the people, sustained by the Peers; only calculated the time which his *bill* would demand in its passage. He did not sufficiently reflect, that he had lost in great measure the popular support, without having acquired the favour of the crown. Nor did he seem to have justly appreciated the general disapprobation, or rather detestation, which the East India Bill eventually excited through all ranks of society. On these powerful auxiliaries, though hitherto not fully matured, Pitt confidently counted. Never, on any occasion, did Fox display the vast capacities of memory, lucid arrangements of ideas, and facilities of clothing his matter in language of energy and effect, with which nature had endowed him, more fully than on the second reading of his *bill*! Having endeavoured by a series of arithmetical reasonings, founded, as he asserted, on the accounts presented by the East India Company at the bar of the house, with the view of showing their solvency; to prove that they were on the contrary, in a state of distress approaching to bankruptcy; Fox added: "I well know that in bringing forward the present measure, I expose my own ministerial situation to hazard. But when, on great national grounds, I can establish a system at once salutary, as well as useful, to this country and to India, I value little the personal risks that I may encounter. If I fall, I shall fall in a great and glorious struggle, not only for the welfare of the company, but for the benefit of the people of Britain, and of Indostan."

Lord North, who had hitherto been absent from the house ever since the commencement of the session, attended in his place on that evening, seated by Fox's side. He even spoke at considerable length, in support of the bill; but, as I thought, without his usual animation, and powers of persuasion or entertainment. Not a scintillation of that wit, which so often electrified or delighted his hearers, pervaded his speech; and though it displayed great

ability, the understanding, rather than conviction or inclination, seemed to dictate all he uttered. Pitt, on the other hand, fastened like a vulture on the secretary's measure, which he held up to the abhorrence of all mankind, as "the most desperate and alarming attempt to exercise tyranny, which ever disgraced the annals of this, or of any other country." "Is the pretended relief," exclaimed he, "which we are to administer in Asia, to be grounded on injustice and violence in Europe? — I pledge myself to the world at large, to point out the fatal operation of this *bill* on everything sacred or dear to Englishmen; to prove its inimical influence on our Constitution and liberties; and to establish by incontrovertible evidence, the false and pernicious principles on which it is founded. But all these particulars necessarily demand time, which the indecent, as well as unprecedented precipitancy of the business, virtually proscribes." — "The secretary has passed in review the statements made by the company, and the accounts presented at the bar, with a rapidity which renders comprehension difficult, and detection almost impossible. For this, as well as for many other reasons, I trust there can be no objection to defer the debate for a single day, in order that the falsehood of the assertions made may be rendered manifest to every comprehension." Vainly, however, were any reclamations addressed to ministers who dreaded, above all things, the operation of delay; and who, after having taken the cabinet by storm, were now impatient to secure their possession of power beyond the reach of accident or fortune. Fox refusing to postpone the discussion, even for a few hours, the division took place; which, as being the first trial of strength on the *East India Bill*, excited no little expectation. It proved a triumph to the *coalition*, and seemed to set at defiance all further opposition within the walls of that House of Parliament; administration carrying with them 229 votes, while the minority did not exceed 120. Under these prosperous, but fallacious appearances, terminated the month of November.

[December.] Fox himself gave, indeed, the strongest indication of his own

apprehensions, from the interposition of delay, by the haste, not to say the precipitation, with which he propelled the bill through the House of Commons. Notwithstanding the opposition given to it in every stage, by Mr. Pitt and his friends; in defiance of petitions presented from the proprietors, as well as from the directors, of the East India Company; and equally contrary to the general sentiment of the capital, no less than to the almost unanimous voice of the nation, which soon began to manifest itself; he pushed forward the measure with indecent ardour. Scarcely three weeks elapsed, from the time of his moving for leave to bring in his bill, on the 18th of November, to his appearance at the bar of the House of Peers, on the 9th of December, when he presented it in person, "*magna comitante caterva*," after its having passed the House of Commons. An ordinary turnpike, canal, or enclosure bill, if opposed in its principles or progress, might have taken longer time, than did this gigantic experiment to render administration in some measure independent of the crown, and of the people. Yet so well had the secretary meditated his plan, such was the parliamentary strength possessed by the *coalition*, and such the ascendancy of Fox over the lower house, that upon every division he carried the question by a vast superiority of numbers, generally exceeding the proportion of two to one. On the question of going into the committee, which took place on the first of December, I quitted Lord North, whom I had commonly supported up to that time, and joined the minority; conceiving it to be, upon every view of the subject, improper longer to adhere to a minister who seemed to have forsaken himself.

The consternation which Fox's *bill* occasioned in Leadenhall-street, among that description of men against whom its provisions were known to be peculiarly levelled, was commonly, though erroneously, said to have proved fatal to Sir William James, who died very suddenly, just at this time. It is however true that he was seized with an indisposition, while sitting in the House of Commons, during the progress of the "*East India Bill*," which compelled him instantly to

return home; but he recovered in a certain degree the attack, though he never afterwards quitted his own house. His death took place instantaneously, during the performance of the ceremony of his only daughter's marriage with the late Lord Ranelagh, then Mr. Boothby Parkyns. I knew Sir William James with great intimacy, and discussed with him, the probable results of the East India measure, during the short interval which elapsed between his first seizure, and the day of his decease, at his residence in Gerrard-street, Soho. His origin was so obscure, as almost to baffle enquiry, and he had derived no advantage from education; but he possessed strong natural abilities, aided by a knowledge of mankind. Having been sent out early in life, to Bombay, in the East India Company's naval service, he there distinguished himself, by commanding the memorable expedition undertaken against Angria the pirate; when we made ourselves masters of Fort Geriah, his principal establishment on the coast of the Concan. Returning to his native country after this successful enterprise, by which he acquired not only some fortune, but considerable reputation; he rose to the first employments at the India House, as a member of the court of directors; sat in successive parliaments; was elevated by the friendship of the late Earl of Sandwich, when first lord of the admiralty, to the baronetage; and had been elected deputy master of the Trinity House, in the preceding month of June, when Lord Keppel was chosen master of that corporation. Those persons who asserted that Fox's *bill* killed him, seem to have forgotten that he had nearly attained his seventieth year, when he expired. As his dissolution took place on the 16th of December, he had not the satisfaction to witness the rejection of that obnoxious measure by the House of Peers, which happened on the following day.

Never, probably, was so great a portion of intellect brought to bear upon one point or subject, in so short a space of time, as the House of Commons exhibited between the opening of the East India Bill, and its triumphant arrival in the upper House of Parliament. All the sources of argument, declamation, wit, and pathos, were successively touched

by master hands. Every species of information enlightened the object under discussion; nor was any weapon of sophistry, humour, or even severe invective, left untried, which might operate on the understanding, passions, and feelings of the audience. The salient points of debate were so many, so striking, and so animated, as to defy the powers of memory; leaving on the hearer's mind, only a confused recollection of their beauty, delicacy, or severity. History, ancient and modern, poetry, even scripture, all were successively pressed into the service, or rendered subservient to the purposes of the contending parties. Will it be believed that the "Apocalypse" of St. John furnished images, which, by a slight effort of imagination, or by an immaterial deviation from the original text, were made to typify Fox, under the form of the "beast that rose up out of the sea, having *seven* heads?" Their application to the *seven* commissioners appointed by the bill, was at once so happy, and so natural, that it could not be mistaken, and stood in need of no explanation. The words which were made to designate the secretary of state himself, seemed almost to identify him by a very characteristic feature, his *bold eloquence*. "And there was given to him a *mouth speaking great things*." But in the duration of the power of *the beast*, as compared with that of the *East India Bill*, a difference of *six months* appeared: the "Apocalypse" stating that "power was given unto him to continue *forty and two months*;" whereas Fox's bill comprehended *forty-eight months*, or four years. Pensions, peerages, and places, were pointed out by the passage where it is said, "and he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, to receive a mark in *their right hand*, or in their forehead."

Mr. Scott who, now as Lord Eldon, holds the great seal, was the person by whom so curious an allusion was presented to the house; as I think, on the third reading of the *bill*. But Sheridan, though he could not possibly anticipate an attack of such a nature, yet having contrived in the course of the debate, to procure some leaves of "the book of Revelations," with admirable

ability found materials in that work, equally suited to Fox's defence or justification; transforming him from "the dragon and the beast," under both which type he had been designated, to a species of angelic or tutelary being, by producing other quotations taken from St. John, full as applicable in their tenor to the secretary of state.

[1st December.] The powers of mind exerted throughout the progress of the measure, seemed to be concentrated in the memorable debate that took place upon sending the *bill* to a committee, which was opened by Powis. His beautiful and severe animadversion on its double author; a metaphor drawn likewise from Holy Writ; made a strong impression. "I hear indeed," said he, "the voice of Jacob," meaning Fox; "but the hands are those of Esau." Lord North, who was present at the time, though much indisposed, quitted the house in the course of the evening, overcome with the immoderate heat. Powis, who did not hesitate to denominate the *bill*, "the modern Babel, which already almost reached the clouds;" and who compared Fox's treatment of the East India Company, with "Shylock's demand of a pound of flesh, to be cut nearest the heart:" expressed nevertheless his personal respect for the secretary; but added, that he "wished to see him the servant, not the master, of his sovereign." No speech pronounced within the walls of the House of Commons, throughout the whole proceedings during the great experiment made by ministers to consolidate their tenure of office, tended more to accelerate their downfall, than did this of Powis. He was neither a candidate for place, nor a courtier, whose eyes were directed to St. James's; nor a lawyer, looking to the dignities and preferments of Westminster Hall. As a country gentleman, representing an extensive county, he delivered with manly firmness, his opinions; which were founded in common sense, couched in language of great force, rising at times to a pitch of affecting eloquence, and sustained by unimpeached probity. During the American war, he had served with zeal and ability under Fox, in the front ranks; had conducted by his active exertions, to

diminish the influence of the crown, and had greatly contributed to drive Lord North from the helm. But he now beheld the structure which he had lent all his efforts to overturn, raised anew on more solid foundations; while "the man of the people, was converted into the champion of influence."—"If," said Powis, "the secretary of state's moderation did not form a guaranty against his ambition, we might imagine him, when communing with himself, thus to express his intentions; 'I have, it is true, forced myself into high employment, by joining a man and a party, whom, after successive years of parliamentary opposition, I had expelled from power. But, by my junction with the noble lord in the blue ribband, I have lost much of my popularity. Still, as I have great influence throughout the country, sustained by powerful connections, I will make good use of my time. The Indies shall constitute the basis of my greatness. Availing myself of my present prosperity, I will construct a golden fortress in this new land of promise; which, by placing in it a select garrison of chosen and determined adherents, on whose zeal and attachment I may implicitly rely, I can render impregnable. A fortress which will not open its gates, either to the summons of the people, or to the commands of the sovereign.' — "For God's sake, let us unite to crush this awful pile, before it swells to such a size, as to leave no room for the other component parts of the British Constitution! Already scarce a vestige of the East India Company is to be traced; and if the present *bill* passes, we shall consign the glory, dignity, and the liberties of our country, to ultimate, as well as certain destruction."

Burke, unable longer to observe silence after such reflections, then rose; and in a dissertation, rather than a speech, which lasted more than three hours, exhausted all the powers of his mighty mind, to the justification of his friend's measure. The most ignorant member of the house, who had attended to the mass of information, historical, political, and financial, which fell from the lips of Burke on that occasion, must have departed, rich in knowledge of Indostan. It seemed impossible to crowd

greater variety of matter applicable to the subject, into a smaller compass; and those who differed most widely from him in opinion, did not render the less justice to his gigantic range of ideas, his lucid exposition of events, and the harmonic flow of his periods. There were portions of this harangue, in which he appeared to be animated by feelings and considerations the most benign, as well as elevated; and the classic language in which he made Fox's panegyric, for having dared to venture on a measure so beset with dangers, but so pregnant, as he asserted, with benefits to mankind, could not be exceeded in beauty.

Indeed, if I were compelled to name the finest composition pronounced in the House of Commons, during the whole time that I remained a member of that assembly, from 1780 to 1794, I should select this speech of Burke. Nor can I be suspected of partiality either towards the author, or the production. The former, though he excited admiration by his genius, was too much the slave of his own prejudices, too implacable, petulant, irascible, and impervious to reason on many subjects, to awaken general good will, or to conciliate affection. To the whole system which his arguments were meant to support, I was decidedly hostile. Yet I did not on these accounts render less justice to the matchless powers of intellect which matured so wonderful an effusion. Far from suffering by a comparison with the orations of the great ancient masters, Greek or Roman, I believe it would gain on an impartial examination. Among the passages of peculiar beauty, might be named his picture of the young men sent out from India, in order to amass sudden wealth. "Animated," said he, "with all the avarice, and all the impetuous ardour of youth, they roll in, one after another, wave after wave: while nothing presents itself to the view of the unhappy natives, except an interminable prospect of new flights of voracious birds of passage, with appetites insatiable for a food, which is continually wasting under their attacks. — Every other conqueror, Arab, Tartar, or Persian, has left behind some monument, either of royal splendour, or of useful benevolence. England has erected

neither churches, nor hospitals, nor schools, nor palaces. If to-morrow we were expelled from Indostan, nothing would remain to indicate that it had been possessed, during the glorious period of our dominion, by any better tenants than the ouran-outang or the tiger." This fine burst of imagination, even though we should conceive it to be too highly coloured, yet presents one of the most vivid assemblages of animated life, ever submitted to the human understanding, while it appeals to the best feelings of our nature.

His eulogium of Mr. Francis (now Sir Philip), whether we acquiesce in its exact accuracy of resemblance, or not, cannot be perused without admiration. Yet was it exceeded by his portrait of Fox, whom Burke compared with the lawgivers of antiquity, while legislating for Asia, and despising every personal consideration, in order to diffuse felicity over distant portions of the earth. "He is well aware," added Burke, "of the snares which are spread in his path, from personal animosity, from *court intrigues*, and possibly, from popular delusion. But, he has hazarded his ease, his security, his power, and his popularity, in the present noble attempt. This is the road which all heroes have trod before him. He will recollect that obloquy constitutes a necessary ingredient in the composition of glory. He will recollect, that it was not only in the Roman customs, but, is in the nature and constitution of things, for calumny to accompany triumph." However classic might be these allusions, and whatever magic might pervade the whole of Burke's discourse; or, however persuaded he was of the reality of all the predicted advantages, that would flow from the measure; the moral effect of his speech in producing conviction, by no means corresponded with the admiration which it excited. Fox, who reserved himself on that night to answer Dundas and Pitt, rose at a late hour, and spoke with his usual ability. "A charter," observed he, "is only a trust for some given benefit. If abused, it may, and ought to be resumed. Sovereigns are sacred; yet, with all my reverence and attachment towards them, had I lived under the reign of James the Second, I

should certainly have contributed my efforts in those illustrious struggles, which rescued us from hereditary servitude, and recorded the doctrine that *trust abused, is revocable*." On Mr. Thomas Pitt, who, when alluding to the *East India Bill*, had asserted that "it was a measure which might be naturally expected from a coalition of two men, who having first seized by force on the government, evidently intended to finish their career by dealing a death-blow to their country," the secretary animadverted in terms of more than ordinary asperity. "I will tell that honorable gentleman," said Fox, looking him steadily in the face, "that the men who have brought forward this bill, are not to be brow-beaten by studied gesture; nor terrified by tremulous tones, solemn phrases, or hard epithets. To arguments, they are ready to reply. He charges us with having *seized upon the government*. His majesty changed his ministers, last April, as he did twelve months earlier; each time in consequence of a vote of this house. So his predecessors did; and his successors will, I doubt not, imitate the example. The votes of Parliament always have, and always will, I trust, decide on the duration of ministry. Such is the nature of our Constitution."

Then addressing himself to the house at large: "A double game," exclaimed Fox, "is playing on this occasion by opposition, to which, I hope, this assembly, and the whole kingdom will pay attention. It is attempted to injure administration through two channels at the same time; through a *certain great quarter*, and through the people. To the former, they assert that the present bill increases the influence of ministers against the crown: while they persuade the nation, that it augments the power of the sovereign to their injury. That they will fail in both these experiments, I have no doubt. In the *great quarter*, I trust, they are well understood; because the *princely mind of that elevated personage, forms a security against their devices*. They will speedily dissipate by their conduct, any temporary illusion which they may have spread among the multitude." Nor was Fox less severe in his remarks upon Jenkinson, than he had been, when commenting on Mr.

Thomas Pitt. "The former of those gentlemen being seated near William Pitt on the opposition bench, as was likewise Dundas, "When I behold," observed the secretary, "the right honorable gentleman now surrounded by the objects of his early and hereditary aversion, and hear him revile the *coalition*, I am lost in amazement at his inconsistency. Well may my noble friend, the chancellor of the exchequer, assert, that *we* never sought to attain power by cabal, or intrigue! The safest path to royal, as well as to popular favour, is by reducing the burthens, and restoring the glory of the nation." Then fixing his eyes on Jenkinson, "let those persons," said he, "*who aim at office through other channels, by mysterious and inscrutable means*, speak out! If they will not, the country must perceive that their arts cannot bear examination, and that their safety lies in their obscurity. The principles which *we* profess, are thoroughly known. With them I prefer to perish, rather than maintain myself by adopting others." After endeavouring to do away the effect of Powis's *soliloquy*, which seemed deeply to affect him, Fox concluded by addressing his last words to Pitt; who in the course of a most able speech, had declared that "he would stake his character with the public, on the dangerous nature and tendency of the *bill* under discussion." "I meet him," said the secretary, "in his own terms of defiance, and I oppose him, character against character. I stake upon the excellence of the present measure, all that is most dear to men; talents, honour, present reputation and future fame. All these I risk on the constitutional safety, the enlarged policy, the equity, and the wisdom of the *bill*." There were persons who thought that under all circumstances of the case, the *stake* was by no means equal; and that it resembled the armour of Diomed, when weighed in value against that of Glaucus. The division, however, which took place at a very late hour, fully equalled the expectation of ministers, being more than two to one. Ayes, 217. Noes, 103. So numerous and flattering a support, which proved how well the secretary had prepared the ground, only accelerated the final catastrophe.

[8th December.] On the third reading of the bill, a new auxiliary appeared on the side of opposition, in the person of Mr. John James Hamilton, since raised by Pitt to the dignity of a marquis; who having taken his seat only a few days preceding, as a member of the house, opened the debate in a speech of considerable ability. Wilkes drew, however, far more attention, not only by the decided part which he took against the measure itself, but by the classic, nervous, and pointed terms in which he inveighed against its fabricators. "No epithet," said he, "can reach the enormity of its guilt, and I shall therefore content myself with characterizing it as a swindling bill, drawn and presented by the secretary of state, to obtain money on false pretences. I consider it as the bitter fruit of *the coalition*:—for, after the lamentable consequences that resulted from the infraction of the *American charters* by the noble lord in the blue ribband, I believe he would never have ventured to attack the franchises and property of a great *chartered company*, if he had not connected himself in impious league with so daring a colleague. When he had secured a fit accomplice, the plan and share of the plunder being previously adjusted, it was resolved between them, to rob the East India Company. I protest that I nourish no ill will personally, to either of the secretaries of state; but I deprecate and dread the unnatural, incongruous union of two individuals, who never could have been brought to coalesce, except for the division of the public spoils, and for the partition of all power among themselves; to be followed by the destruction of public freedom, and the independence of this assembly. The noble lord possesses, I believe, the most unspotted integrity: but love of place, combining with indolence of natural disposition, led him throughout the whole progress of the American contest, to connive at men in public office fleeing the state, beyond the example of former times. His own hands were clean; but not so those of his dependents. As a private nobleman, he is formed to be admired and beloved. To a rich vein of elegant, brilliant and classic wit, he joins easy manners, unaffected suavity of

temper, and every amiable or companionable quality. Would to heaven I could commend his reverence for the Constitution, his love of freedom, and his zeal for the preservation of those privileges and franchises, which constitute the birthright of Englishmen!"

This accurate and admirable portrait, sketched by the hand of a master who well knew the original, was followed by an apostrophé to Fox, not less calculated to attract attention. "With the present colleague of that noble lord," continued Wilkes, "I have acted during many sessions, in hostility to him. By his side I fought in all the struggles to repress the power of the crown. With what admiration have I listened to his manly eloquence, sustained by the powers of argument and reason! *So perfect a parliamentary debater, this assembly has never beheld!* I grieve when I reflect how unavailing have been all our efforts, to prevent the dismemberment of so large a portion of the empire. But I am indignant when I see the noble lord occupying one of the highest employments, reconducted to power, nay, caressed and cherished by the very man who solemnly engaged to impeach him, as the *great criminal of state, the corrupter of parliament, the author and contriver of our national destruction.*"

From every quarter of the house, the keenest shafts were aimed at the measure; some of which penetrated deep, while others only appeared to graze on the surface; but all left their impression. While Pitt powerfully sustained by Mr. William Grenville, and Dundas, attacked it with the arms of reason; others tried the operation of irony and ridicule. Arden, who soon afterwards became solicitor general, on the change of ministry, clung to it through every stage with great pertinacity and spirit, not unaccompanied by legal ability. The seven commissioners, and their eight assistant directors, were compared by Mr. Wilberforce, to so many doctors and apothecaries, summoned for the purpose of putting the patient, the East India Company, to death, according to the rules of art. Many members, long accustomed to consider Fox as the star by which they guided their political course, covered him on this occasion,

with reproaches or maledictions. Martin, a man, who though not distinguished by superior intellectual parts, yielded to none in probity, invoked curses on the *coalition*, as the grave of all principle. "When once the present *bill* is passed," said he, "men who think and act independently, may spare themselves the trouble of coming down to this assembly. — I will, however, steadily oppose it, as I have done in every former stage, till it is sent up to the Peers. I trust, they will esteem it utterly inconsistent either with their justice, or with their dignity, to pass such a *bill*. But even if it should be otherwise, one hope is still left us. — I mean that his majesty will refuse his assent to so pernicious a measure." Martin did not hesitate to declare, that neither Sir George Savile, nor Sir Charles Turner, the latter of whom was already dead; and the former lay extenuated by diseases which speedily conducted him to the grave; — would, had they been present, have lent any countenance or support to the East India Bill.

Sir Richard Hill, to whom scripture was familiar, compared the secretary's conduct in affecting to protect and caress the East India Company, while he immolated them to his ambition; with the treachery of Joab to Amasa, who at the moment that he pretended to embrace him, stabbed him to the heart. "If," added Sir Richard, "I might present a gift to him who will have extended at his feet, the whole patronage of the East, and who by this *bill* will be rendered greater than any oriental nabob: — If the secretary would deign to accept from my hands, so small a boon as a motto, I will venture to offer him, '*Non sum qualis eram.*'" In more homely language, destitute of adventitious ornament, Sir Cecil Wray declared that the measure impressed him with horror, from its enormity, corruption, and pernicious consequences to the state. Some of the finest passages of Shakspeare, taken from his "*Julius Cæsar*," were applied by Scott and Arden to Fox, as the new *dictator*, with extraordinary effect. Powis accused the secretary with deceiving himself and the house, by professions of zeal and disinterestedness, which served

only as a cover to his ambitious designs. "He still persists," said Powis, "to maintain the purity of his political principles, and to bid his deluded countrymen confide in his fair promises. But I form my judgment by measures, not by men. And by that criterion I mean to try all the supporters of the present enormous measure, which aims a mortal blow at the independence of parliament." Jenkinson temperately, but in language of energy, depicted the unconstitutional nature of the power thus attempted to be set up, which must prove subversive of the royal prerogative; and from opposite sides, Fox was assailed as the enemy of his country, who sacrificed to his insatiable ambition, the character, and the consideration, that he had attained by a long series of public services.

Not that he by any means wanted defenders distinguished for integrity, as well as for legal and parliamentary ability. Mr. Erskine spoke repeatedly, at great length, during the progress of the bill, in support of this obnoxious measure. His enemies pronounced his performances tame, and destitute of the animation which so powerfully characterised his speeches in Westminster Hall. They maintained that, however resplendent he appeared as an advocate, while addressing a jury, he fell to the level of an ordinary man, if not below it, when seated on the ministerial bench; where another species of oratory was demanded to impress conviction, or to exhort admiration. To me, who, having never witnessed his jurisprudential talents, could not make any such comparison, he appeared to exhibit shining powers of declamation. Lee, the attorney general, in a speech replete with that coarse, strong, and illiberal species of invective which usually accompanied his addresses to the house, and which always appeared to me more befitting the Robinhood society, than accommodated to a legislative assembly, treated with indignant contempt the repugnance manifested to violate the charter of the East India Company. He did not even hesitate to describe that charter, esteemed by many members so sacred, and incapable of subversion except by arbitrary violence, as "a mere skin of parchment, to which

was appended a seal of wax." This imprudent, if not censurable declaration, coming from such a quarter, however qualified or palliated it might be by subsequent explanations, operated injuriously to ministers. With the same contumelious levity he spoke of his office, which, he said, "he valued not a rush;" adding, "my learned friend (Arden), should have it to-morrow, if I did not conceive that by continuing to hold it, I can be of some utility to administration." The chancellor of the exchequer, irritated at the severe animadversions made by Mr. Thomas Pitt, on the violence with which administration had seized on the reigns of government, denied the charge with much indignation. His eloquence fell, however, far short of his feelings, and was addressed rather to the moral sense of his auditors, than it appealed to their understandings or to their judgment.

General Burgoyne, arriving post from Ireland (spontaneously, as he asserted), and quitting the meaner duties of commander-in-chief, which employment he held in that kingdom, in order to fulfil his higher obligations as a legislator at Westminster, spoke warmly in favour of the bill. Having, many years earlier, acted as chairman of one of the first committees appointed by the house, for inquiring into the affairs of the east, he was heard with attention. He confirmed all the horrors and enormities attributed by Burke to the Europeans who governed Asia: atrocities, which the general illustrated by a citation prepared for the purpose, extracted from the sixth *Æneid* of Virgil, descriptive of the guilt of a powerful criminal, such as Hastings might be esteemed, condemned for his crimes on earth, to undergo the pains of Tartarus. It did not impress the house as powerfully as Arden's line from Shakspeare, directed to Fox,

"It is the bright day that brings forth the adder;"

or as Wilberforce's invocation to the secretary of state, under the character of *the fallen angel*, furnished by Milton. I remember Burke addressing Lord North, when first minister, in somewhat similar terms, shortly before his resignation, early in 1782. Rigby pro-

fessing an equal contempt for quotations from Shakspeare, or from Milton, and expressing his admiration at hearing scripture fall from the lips of a lawyer; with none of which materials for debate, he said, that he came provided; yet professed to have furnished himself with some arguments applicable to the subject under discussion. Without circumlocution, or any false scruples of fastidious delicacy, he declared his utter disregard of the chartered rights of the company, which, he said, he considered "as a bugbear, only fit to intimidate children." He even advised their violation, as the primary step to all reform in the administration of India.

No individual distinguished himself more throughout the whole progress of these interesting proceedings, than Sheridan; whose matchless endowments of mind, equally adapted to contests of wit, or of argument, and even under the control of imperturbable temper, enabled him to extend invaluable assistance to the minister. But neither was Fox wanting to himself, or to his friends. On the contrary, performing every function of a general, and of a private soldier, combating in the front ranks, leaving no charge unrepelled, no insinuation unnoticed, no argument unrefuted; he filled with astonishment, as well as with admiration, even those who thought themselves best able to appreciate the magnitude and extent of his parliamentary talents. After defending his *bill* from the severe attacks of Pitt, he did not disdain or omit to answer the allegations made by various members of inferior weight. To Powis, to Scott, to Dundas, and even to Martin, he severally directed the most pointed replies, calculated to justify him, not only as a minister, but in his individual and moral capacity. Determined on carrying through the *bill*, without a moment's delay; apprehensive of new obstacles arising, every hour, within as well as without the walls of the house: and seeming to regard parliament as convoked, not for the purpose of deliberation, but of decision; he refused to postpone the measure even for a single night. Vainly Scott adjured him, in the language of Desdemona to Othello, "Kill me not to-night, my lord! let me live but one

day!" The house, towards two o'clock in the morning, became so clamorous for the question, that a division was on the point of taking place, when an unexpected incident prolonged the discussion, and arrested the universal impatience of the assembly.

Mr. Henry Flood, one of the most celebrated orators in the Irish Parliament, who had just been brought in for the city of Winchester; rising for the first time, prepared to speak in the British House of Commons. His appearance produced an instant calm, and he was heard with universal curiosity, while he delivered his sentiments, which were strongly inimical to the East India Bill. Though possessing little local, or accurate information on the immediate subject of debate, he spoke with great ability and good sense: but, the slow, measured, and sententious style of enunciation which characterized his eloquence, however calculated to excite admiration it might be in the senate of the sister kingdom, appeared to English ears, cold, stiff, and deficient in some of the best recommendations to attention. Unfortunately, too, for Flood, one of his own countrymen, Courtenay, instantly opened on him such a battery of ridicule and wit, seasoned with allusions or reflections of the most personal and painful kind, as seemed to overwhelm the new member. He made no attempt at reply, and under these circumstances began the division. It formed a triumphant exhibition of ministerial strength, the *coalition* numbering 208, while only 102 persons, of whom I was one, followed Pitt into the lobby. Yet within twelve days afterwards he found himself first minister, and so remained for above seventeen years. Meanwhile, the secretary never relaxed his exertions, till, having surmounted all opposition, he carried up the bill, accompanied by a vast number of his adherents, who participated in his success, to the bar of the House of Peers. Its passage through that assembly being already secured, as he justly conceived, on solid grounds, and the royal negative never exciting any apprehension, the measure seemed apparently to be placed beyond the reach of fortune.

[9th—17th December.] But, with the arrival of the East India Bill in the House

of Lords, terminated nevertheless the prosperous career of ministers. The king, whose opinions and wishes, however they might have been suspected by, or even known to a few persons, were not as yet publicly divulged, or clearly ascertained; now coming forward, as the urgency of the occasion seemed to demand, communicated through authentic channels, his utter disapprobation of the measure. Lord Temple, though one of the first individuals thus authorized, formed by no means the sole or exclusive medium, through which the royal pleasure was so signified and circulated. Very little time, in fact, remained to the sovereign, if he desired to avert the impending misfortune. For, the secretary of state, who seems to have been well aware that as soon as the measure was felt and understood, it would excite universal alarm; had betimes secured such a majority in the upper house, as must speedily have left to the crown no possible means of relief, except one scarcely known to the British Constitution since the revolution of 1688; namely, a refusal of the royal assent to the *bill*, after its passage through both Houses of Parliament. In this critical juncture, his majesty caused such arguments or expositions to be offered to many members of the House of Lords, spiritual, as well as temporal; and the necessity of resistance was so strongly depicted by his emissaries, as to overturn all Fox's machinery in an instant. Proxies given to the minister, were suddenly revoked; and after first leaving the administration in a minority of eight, upon the question of adjournment; the bill itself was subsequently rejected two days later, by nineteen votes. One hundred and seventy-one peers voted on the occasion, either in person, or by proxy; a prodigious attendance, if we consider the limited numbers of the British peerage at that time.

The Archbishops of Canterbury and of York, led the way, through the former prelate, whose connexions, political and matrimonial, seemed to connect him with the *coalition*, had been previously regarded as a firm supporter of the measure. The latter (Markham), who was not less a courtier than a scholar, throughout life always kept his eye constantly

fixed on the throne. Nor can it excite surprise, that all those noble individuals without exception, who occupied situations in the royal household, or near the king's person, should, without fastidiously hesitating, give the example of tergiversation. The greater number among them, had only assented to the East India Bill, on a supposition, and under the belief, that it had received the previous concurrence or approbation of his majesty. They abandoned ministers, and joined the crown; manifesting by their votes, how vast is the personal influence of the sovereign, when strenuously exerted, over the members of the upper House of Parliament. The Prince of Wales, who had only taken the oaths and his seat in that assembly, on the first day of the session, the 11th of November; when it was moved to adjourn on the 15th of December, had voted in person with the administration. But, having received a notification of his father's disapprobation of the East India Bill, and of the whole conduct of ministers, he absented himself on the second division, when that measure was finally rejected. Lord Rivers, one of the lords of the king's bedchamber, who had given his vote by proxy to the *coalition*, on the first question, withdrew it on the second division; as did the Earls of Hardwicke and of Egremont. Lord Stormont, though as being a member of the cabinet, and president of the council, he had personally supported the *bill* on the 15th, when he considered it as having the sanction of the crown, yet voted on the other side, forty-eight hours afterwards. His uncle, the Earl of Mansfield, who was supposed to have influenced him in this determination, exhibited the same example. Both were present in the first division, as supporters of the measure; and both appeared in the house as enemies to it, when thrown out on the 17th of December. The Earl of Oxford, one of his majesty's most ancient servants, who had been near his person more than twenty years, in the capacity of a lord of the bedchamber; having been induced to support the *coalition* by his proxy on the 15th, sent it to the opposite side, on the subsequent division. Fox and Burke, together with many of their warmest ad-

herents, who during the progress of the first debate had remained on the steps of the throne, in order by their presence to encourage their friends in the upper house, had the mortification to witness the defeat experienced on that evening;—a defeat which served as a warning of its final destiny.

The debates which took place in the upper house, on the two questions of adjournment and of rejection; however inferior an interest they excited, when compared with the discussions that agitated the House of Commons on the same subject; yet strongly arrested national attention. Lord Thurlow, after reproaching the *bill*, and treating with contemptuous ridicule the reports of the "select committee," on which defective or erroneous foundations, the pretended necessity for the measure rested; declared that "if it passed, the king would in fact take the diadem from his own head, and place it on the head of Mr. Fox." In more intemperate language, scarcely befitting so dignified an assembly, the Earl of Abingdon, a nobleman of very eccentric character, and restrained by no forms of parliamentary decorum, while expressing his abhorrence of a coalition which had given birth to this political monster; qualified Charles James Fox by name, as "a mountebank secretary of state, accustomed formerly to ascend the stages at Covent Garden, and at Westminster Hall, from which he harangued the mob; but now calling himself the minister of the people, though animated by the criminal ambition of Cromwell, and aiming at regal power." He even accused the secretary with exceeding in violence, by his seizure of the East India Company's charter, the worst acts of those tyrants, Charles the Second, and his brother James. With great pertinacity, the Duke of Richmond pointed out the injustice of the measure: nor did the ties of consanguinity which connected him with Fox, prevent him from severely arraigning the recent grant of a pension of one thousand pounds a year, made to Sir William Gordon; in order, by vacating his seat for Portsmouth, that he might enable government to introduce Mr. Erskine into the House of Commons, at this critical juncture. Unsolicited, and unconnected with party,

Lord Camden entered his strong protest against such an infraction of all law on the part of administration, by bringing forward an act, not, as it professed to be, of regulation, but of rapacious confiscation.

Ministers, thus powerfully assailed, if they exhibited the talents, by no means displayed the energies, exerted by their opponents. Lord Loughborough, on whom devolved the principal weight of defending the government, found himself ill supported in that attempt. The Speaker, Lord Mansfield, voted indeed with administration on the question of adjournment; but remained altogether silent, and extended no active assistance. Conscious that his colleagues had lost the confidence of the king, the Duke of Portland alluded with warmth, in the course of debate, to Lord Temple's recent audience of the sovereign, which he denounced as a violation of the Constitution. But that nobleman avowing the fact, and justifying it as the privilege of an hereditary counsellor of the crown, to offer advice, called on the duke to bring forward against him a specific charge. Lord Shelburne, though he once, I believe, attended in his place, took no part whatever in the discussions, nor ever voted on the question, either in person, or by proxy: — a line of conduct, which, when we consider that he had been expelled from power by the *coalition*, only a few months earlier, opened a wide field for political speculation, on the motives of his silence or secession.

It will be readily admitted, that if we try the conduct of George the Third, in personally interposing to influence the debates, and to render himself master of the deliberations of the upper house, by the spirit of our Constitution, as fixed since the expulsion of James the Second; it appears at first sight, subversive of every principle of political freedom. Such an ill-timed and imprudent interference, had in fact laid the foundation of all the misfortunes of Charles the First. But the same line of conduct, which in 1641 excited general indignation, in 1783 awakened no sentiment of national condemnation. On the contrary, the king's position being perfectly understood; the impossibility of his extrication from the ministerial toils wound about him, ap-

peared so clearly demonstrated, unless by a decided personal effort to arrest the bill in its progress through the House of Lords, that the country at large affixed its sanction to the act. There were, nevertheless, it must be admitted, many individuals who thought that the royal disapprobation should have been earlier signified; and who inclined to accuse the king of something like duplicity or deception, in his treatment of administration. We must however candidly allow, that he was not bound to observe any measures of scrupulous delicacy, with men who had entered his cabinet by violence, who held him in bondage, and who meditated to render that bondage perpetual. Nor was it easy for him to discover and to detect, by the force of his own intellect, without legal assistance, the invasions on his independence and prerogative, contained in the provisions of the *bill*, as originally submitted to him; till they were exposed and made manifest, by the discussions that took place in the House of Commons. The rapidity with which it was carried up to the Peers, and the little delay which Fox evidently meant it should there undergo, before it was presented for his concurrence, left him no option in his line of conduct, and very little time for action. These reasons exculpated and justified an interference, apparently so irreconcilable with the genius of the British Constitution. A fact not generally known, but not the less true, is, that his majesty was advised, and had taken the resolution, if the bill had actually passed the House of Lords, to have nevertheless refused to it the royal assent. He would then have instantly changed his ministers, dissolved the parliament, and thrown himself for protection upon his people. Those persons who have had the best opportunities of knowing his character, and appreciating his firmness under the most alarming or distressful circumstances, while sustained by the conviction of acting right; will not doubt or disbelieve the fact. Nor would the nation, probably, have condemned his conduct, or have delivered him up again into the hands of the *coalition*. Happily, however, the middle line which he adopted, prevented the necessity of recurring to such painful extremities.

[17th December]. Though Fox's bill was thus rejected by the upper house, he still remained, together with Lord North, in possession of their respective offices, no change whatever in administration having yet taken place. Fox even delivered, as secretary of state, from the treasury bench, the most bitter and animated philippic ever pronounced within the walls of the House of Commons; in the course of which, he dealt out every accusation against the sovereign, and those members of the House of Peers; the prætorian bands, or rather the *janizaries*, as he denominated them; who had strangled the measure by their sultan's order. Nor did he hesitate to compare the paper intrusted by his majesty to Lord Temple, which had operated such injurious effects to the administration, with the rescript of Tiberius sent to the Roman senate from Capræa, for the condemnation of Sejanus, unheard in his defence, and without adducing proofs of his guilt. In classic language, and in the words of Juvenal, he reprobated such an interference, as wholly destructive of the British Constitution.

The whole of this debate formed one of the most curious and singular scenes ever witnessed; the ministers being virtually out of office, though still occupying their official seats; while Pitt and his friends, though nominally in opposition, in fact possessed the royal confidence. Fox anticipated indeed with certainty, the total rejection of his *bill* in the upper house: but as the Peers sat late before the division took place, the fact was not known at the hour when the secretary made his memorable philippic. The proceedings in the House of Commons, were opened with a sort of mock solemnity, calculated to give them a degree of dramatic effect; the mace being sent round, on a request made to the Speaker, for the purpose, to summon the attendance of all members found in the adjacent rooms. This extraordinary mandate from the chair, so unusual, was designed to spread alarm, as if the privileges of the house were invaded by the unconstitutional influence or interference of the crown. Precedents were sought for and found, for the vote proposed to be adopted, in the year 1640, when the conduct of Charles the First was said to exhibit a striking con-

formity, with the acts of George the Third, in thus personally exerting himself, through various noble individuals, to throw out the East India Bill. The elements of the business being arranged and prepared, a second motion was proposed from the ministerial side of the house, reprobating, as "subversive of the Constitution, the attempt to report any opinion of his majesty upon a depending bill, with a view to influence members." Its object being to designate and to criminate Lord Temple, who had exerted himself more than any other peer in circulating the royal wishes, the proposition was strongly opposed by Mr. William Grenville, that nobleman's youngest brother. He called on the accuser, to stand forth, and to make good the charge.

Pitt, after treating with derision the preparatory formalities which introduced the resolution then submitted to the house, demanded on what ground the assertion itself reposed, except upon vague surmise, or common rumour? Fox now came forward for the last time in his ministerial capacity, and in a speech of unreasonable length, but of prodigious energy, accompanied with more than ordinary asperity of language, he endeavoured to rally his disheartened troops; among whom, many already began to perceive that they had committed themselves, on erroneous suppositions, beyond their intentions. We may, indeed, safely assume, that only a small proportion of the five hundred and fifty-eight members who then composed the lower House of Parliament, possessed ability, industry, and leisure sufficient, in addition to local knowledge, for enabling them to weigh in their own scales, the East India Bill; — a measure of so complex and comprehensive a nature in itself; and at that time, not at all generally understood throughout the kingdom. Fox's followers, it is true, were for the most part, zealously and personally attached to him, as their sole leader round whom they rallied, in or out of power. But Lord North counted many adherents, who, in supporting his measures, believed that they were maintaining the government, and looked more to the minister than to the man. Various individuals held offices in the

royal household, or about the court; among which description of members, a great defection must naturally be expected. Such was the state of that assembly on the night of the 17th of December; one of the most extraordinary to be found in our history!

"The deliberations of this evening," observed Fox, when he rose, "must decide whether we are to be henceforward freemen or slaves; whether this house is the palladium of liberty, or the engine of despotism; whether we are prospectively to exercise any functions of our own, or to become the mere echo of secret influence. I trust Englishmen will be as jealous of that influence, as superior to open violence. The *bill*, though matured by all the abilities of this house, and though supported by nearly two to one, on every division during its progress, *will in all probability be lost elsewhere*. By whom? By an independent majority? No! By the votes of the lords of the bed-chamber." After exhausting his resentment on those noble persons, who had, as he asserted, "forfeited by their conduct, every claim to the character of gentlemen, and degraded the characteristic independence of the peerage, as well as villified the British legislature in the eyes of all Europe," the secretary diverged to other topics of declamation. "On what foundation," demanded he, "do the ministers stand, who come into office by means of secret influence? Have they not a halter about their necks? They hold their employments, not at the option of the sovereign, but of the very reptiles who burrow under the throne. What *man* would stoop to such humiliation! *Boys*, without judgment, experience, or knowledge of the world, may thus precipitately follow the headlong course of ambition, and *vault into the seat, while the reins are committed to other hands*; but the minister who can submit to such degradation, and the country which tolerates it, must be mutual curses to each other."

Having thus depicted Pitt's position, Fox turned round upon Jenkinson. "During the interregnum of the last spring," observed he, "I never had a doubt, with whom that disgraceful suspension of government originated. In

like manner, no sooner were pretended grounds of objection stated to the East India Bill, than I instantly looked to the same quarter. The same dark and mysterious cabal which then invested the throne, misleading the royal mind with unworthy arts, has been once more employed to perform a similar part. But will this enlightened country revert to those ages when princes were tyrants, ministers were minions, and government only intrigue? For God's sake, in every case strangle us not in the very moment when we look for success, by an infamous band of bed-chamber janizaries! When the hour arrives, and it may not be very distant, which shall dismiss me from the public service, I will not imitate the example set me by the late chancellor of the exchequer, of lingering in office after the national voice calls on me to be gone. *I did not come in by the fiat of majesty, though by that fiat I am not reluctant to go out*. I ever stood, and wish only to stand, on public ground. *The people of England have made me what I am*. It was by their partiality I have been called to a station in their service. Perhaps it would not be treating *them* well, hastily or precipitately to abandon the post which *they* have confided to me." Fox concluded, nevertheless, this harangue, one of the most violent ever pronounced in my time, within the walls of the house, by an encomium on the very sovereign whose service he was about to quit, and on whom he had thrown out so many severe reflections. "No man," said he, "venerates him more than I do, for his personal and domestic virtues." But as he subjoined, that "the present generation regarded his majesty for the virtuous example which he exhibited, and posterity would long adore him for his *progeny*," Pepper Arden did not fail to remark, that Fox's veneration for the sovereign arose principally from attachment to his *posterity*.

Vainly, nevertheless, Pitt urged him to retire, and thus to anticipate his dismissal from employment. Content with rendering the majority of the house subservient to his views, by passing various *resolutions*, calculated not only to stigmatize the late interference of the crown; but intended at the same time to

prevent the interruption of their deliberations, by any act of prerogative; all which motions he carried by a majority of more than two to one; the *coalition* ministers refused to give in their resignation. Under these circumstances, which called for decision, the king displayed no irresolution. Conscious that he had advanced too far to recede, either with honour or with benefit, he passed the whole of the 18th of December, in making dispositions for the formation of a new cabinet; and finding, at a late hour of the evening, that the two secretaries of state declined to resign, he signified to them, by a messenger, that he had no further occasion for their services. They received at the same time, information, that a personal interview would be disagreeable to him; and were ordered to deliver up the seals of their respective departments, through the medium of the two under-secretaries, Fraser and Nepean. Mr. Fox immediately complied; but Lord North, having deposited the seal of his office in the hands of his son, Colonel North, one of his under-secretaries, who could nowhere be found for a considerable time; the king waited patiently at St. James's, till it should be brought to him. Mr. Pollock, first clerk to Lord North's office, who had already retired to rest, being called out of his bed, in consequence of the requisition from his majesty, went in search of Colonel North. After a long delay, he was found, and produced the seal; which being brought to the king about one o'clock in the morning, he delivered it into Lord Temple's hands, and then returned to the queen's house.

[19th December.] On the ensuing day, it being indispensable to form a government with the least possible delay, Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding his youth, was placed at the head of the new cabinet, as first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer; an instance without precedent in our annals, and which will probably never be again realised! Lord Bolingbroke, then Mr. St. John, had indeed, under Queen Anne, been made secretary at war, as early in life; and we have since seen Lord Henry Petty, now Marquis of Lansdown, at about the same age, raised

to the chancellorship of the exchequer, in 1806, after Mr. Pitt's decease. But there is a wide interval, from either of the above examples, to the elevation before us. If we reflect likewise on the decided majority against which Pitt had to contend in the House of Commons, conducted by such energies and talents as Fox possessed; we may be tempted on first consideration, to accuse him of imprudence and temerity. The event nevertheless proved, that in accepting employment, under all the disadvantages here enumerated, he had maturely weighed the peril and the consequences. Other impediments, not less serious, presented themselves in the interior of the cabinet recently formed; where Lord Temple insisted on the immediate dissolution of parliament, as a step necessary to their ministerial preservation, if not even to their personal safety. But Pitt, with consummate judgment, while he retained in his own hands so powerful an engine, which he held suspended over the House of Commons, abstained from using it, till the progress of affairs should justify the interposition. Conscious that no act of the royal prerogative, could be more generally repugnant to the inclinations of the members of the lower house, than a dissolution before they had sat half the period for which they had been elected, he resisted Lord Temple's proposition; who, in consequence, immediately resigned, only three days after his appointment: thus involving the half-formed administration in confusion and embarrassment, not wholly exempt even from some degree of ridicule and of danger. Never did any ministry commence its career under a more inauspicious and apparently desperate predicament, which was destined so long to retain possession of the reins of power!

Pepper Arden having moved Pitt's *writ* for the borough of Appleby, Dundas, acting as his delegate while he could not be personally present in the house, endeavoured to induce that assembly to meet on the subsequent day (Saturday, the 20th of December), in order to expedite the passage of the land tax. But Fox, now out of office, affecting to suppose that an immediate dissolution of

Parliament impended, peremptorily refused his consent to the proposition. He observed, that "though he did not deny the right of the crown to dissolve, yet no person would venture to say, such a prerogative ought to be exercised, *merely to suit the convenience of an ambitious young man.*" Lord Mulgrave, who not long afterwards became joint paymaster of the forces under the new ministry, supported Mr. Dundas; and in the course of his speech expressed great pleasure, that "a faction which had too long maintained possession of power, was at length driven from place." Lord North and Fox being seated close to each other on the opposition bench, sustained by a very numerous attendance of their friends, constituting an undisputed majority of the members present; a loud and general laugh arose among them, at the word *faction*. I am glad," resumed Lord Mulgrave, "to find that gentlemen are so merry upon their misfortune. I still, however, rejoice that their power is extinct. Not that I mean," looking at Lord North, "I am glad to see my noble friend in the blue ribband, out of employment. I respect his character. I too well know his integrity and abilities, not to wish that he were in office; but I lament to behold him in such bad company." Kenyon likewise spoke on the same side, with his characteristic disregard of all personal objects or interests, though he was made attorney general only a few days afterwards, for the second time. "I am neither in the secrets of those persons who are just dismissed," said he, "nor of their successors; and therefore I cannot know whether Parliament will, or will not be dissolved. If a dissolution should take place, I am ignorant whether I may have a seat in the next House of Commons. Nor, indeed, do I wish it. But be that as it may, I will support the proposition of Mr. Dundas, because the most fatal consequences to public credit must ensue, if the land tax does not speedily pass." Lord North answered both Kenyon and Lord Mulgrave, with his accustomed suavity, wit, and powers of argument: but Fox, holding fast the supremacy which he possessed over the House, refused to permit the assembly to meet on the following day. Nor did

Dundas venture on a division, well knowing how decided a superiority of numbers the *coalition* could command within those walls. An adjournment then took place.

[20th and 21st December.] Meanwhile the sovereign proceeded to constitute a new administration; but, even after Lord Temple's resignation, when the cabinet was at length completed, Pitt might be said to constitute its whole strength in one house, as Lord Thurlow equally sustained the weight of government in the other assembly. The great seal was entrusted to the latter, for the fourth time under the reign of George the Third. Lord Gower, made President of the Council, and the Duke of Rutland, who was appointed privy seal, brought indeed, collectively, a considerable accession of parliamentary interest and connexions; but, could boast only a very scanty addition of eloquence, or of talents. The new secretaries of state, Lord Sydney, and the Marquis of Carmarthen, even if their abilities had been of the most brilliant description;—an assertion which assuredly could not be made consistently with truth;—yet were both members of the House of Peers: a disadvantage only to be surmounted by Pitt's taking on himself, the whole weight of business in the House of Commons, and thus uniting in some measure in his own person, the defence of every department. Lord Howe, restored to the head of the admiralty, was re-admitted into the cabinet; and the Duke of Richmond returned to the ordnance; but no mention was ever made of Lord Shelburne, for any place in the administration. He seemed to be completely extinct in the public recollection.

Sir George Howard obtained the command of the forces; but neither he, nor the Duke of Richmond, were taken into the cabinet. The new commander-in-chief, a man of almost gigantic stature and proportions, who had long been decorated with the order of the *Bath*, was universally esteemed; himself highly bred, an accomplished courtier, and a gallant soldier: but like Sir John Irwine, of whom I have had occasion to speak, he owed his military elevation and employments, more perhaps to royal favour than to any distinguished talents, or pro-

fessional services. He was one of the representatives for the town of Stamford. His legitimate descent from, or alliance by consanguinity with the Dukes of Norfolk, notwithstanding the apparent evidence of his name, was, I believe, not established on incontestable grounds. He attained, as did General Conway, not many years afterwards, to the rank of field marshal ; a dignity of which the British service had antecedently furnished only a few examples. For the embassy to Paris, the Duke of Dorset was selected by Pitt. As he honoured me with his friendship down to the close of his life, or rather till he survived himself, it may be naturally expected that I should saw a few words respecting him. He was the son of Lord John Sackville, elder brother of Lord George ; and succeeded collaterally to the title, on the demise of his uncle, Charles, second Duke of Dorset, mentioned so frequently in "Dodgington's Diary," as the Earl of Middlesex. The duke, when named ambassador to Versailles, had nearly attained his fortieth year. His person, if not handsome, was highly agreeable ; his features, pleasing ; the expression of his countenance, noble, and interesting ; his manners soft, quiet, ingratiating, and formed for a court ; destitute of all affectation, but not deficient in dignity. He displayed indeed, neither shining parts, nor superior abilities. Yet, as he possessed good sense, matured by knowledge of the world, had travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and had improved his understanding by an extensive acquaintance with mankind, he was well calculated for such a mission. He had passed much time in Italy, where he imbibed a strong passion for all the fine arts, and a predilection for men of talents and artists ; -- a taste which he indulged even beyond the limits of his fortune, and in the gratification of which, he manifested that he inherited some of the qualities of his celebrated ancestor, Charles, Earl of Dorset. But the mediocrity of his estate, when contrasted with his high rank, imposed limits on the liberality of his disposition. Considered as ambassador to France, though he could not sustain a comparison for diplomatic ability, or strength of intellect, with the Earl of Stair, or with the first Horace Walpole,

brother of Sir Robert, who had represented the English sovereign, at the courts of Louis the Fourteenth and Fifteenth ; he might at least be regarded as equal in talents, to any of the noblemen who had filled that office during the last years of George the Second, or under the reign of George the Third ; if we except, as we must do, Lord Stormont. To Marie Antoinette, the French queen, the Duke of Dorset rendered himself highly acceptable, possessed her esteem, and enjoyed some degree of her personal favour ; — circumstances by no means unessential to a man placed in his public situation, as that princess performed a much more important part in the cabinet and councils of Louis the Sixteenth, than did the two queens, her immediate predecessors. Maria Theresa, daughter of Philip the Fourth, King of Spain, who espoused Louis the Fourteenth ; and Maria Leczinska, consort of his successor, possessed throughout their whole lives, no shadow of political power of interest. Marie Antoinette's protection, aided by his connexion with the Polignacs, had sufficed to procure for the Count d'Adhemar, at the conclusion of peace, the embassy to the court of England : but he was far inferior in every accomplishment of mind and of manners, to the Duke of Dorset.

Mr. Arden became solicitor general. Nature has seldom cast a human being in a less elegant or pleasing mould. Even Dunning's person would have gained by a comparison with Arden's figure and countenance. Nor were his legal talents more conspicuous in the general estimation of the bar. But his early acquaintance with Pitt, which time had matured into friendship, covered or concealed every jurisprudential deficiency. That powerful protection, in defiance of Lord Thurlow's avowed dislike, or rather antipathy, conducted the new solicitor general rapidly to the honours and dignities of the law ; finally placing him, where almost all those individuals patronised by the minister, found their ultimate repose, in the House of Peers. He possessed no mean talents for debate, and displayed not only ardour, but ability in the defence of his friends. When Fox, at this very time proposed that a resolution should be adopted, declaring

any minister criminal who should advise his majesty to dissolve the parliament, Arden instantly stood up to reprobate such doctrine. "What impediment," exclaimed he, "can be opposed to the just prerogative of the crown? A resolution of this house? He must be indeed a *timid* minister, unfit to govern this great country, who can be deterred from advising a dissolution, by any terror of such a nature. Is *this* House of Commons to judge upon a question of their own continuance, or annihilation? That measure is not to be tried before such judges. It will be determined by *another* house within these walls; and *they* may possibly applaud, instead of censuring or condemning the resolution. I admit that it is no light matter to advise such a step: but the individuals who are to be annihilated by its operation, are of all others the least proper to decide respecting it." Fox replied, that "he must be a *bold* minister indeed, who should dare to despise the voice of the people." But Arden rose a second time, and while he admitted that the people merited every attention, when their opinion was solemnly or clearly pronounced, maintained, and distinctly repeated his original declaration. It must likewise be allowed, that no man in parliament, had given a more pertinacious and unremitting opposition to Fox's East India Bill, than Arden. The last blow aimed at it, before it passed the lower house, came from his lips. For I recollect, that after that obnoxious measure had been carried, on the third reading, by a majority of more than two to one; the solicitor general, Mansfield, having risen to move for leave to bring up a clause, declaring it to be a *public bill*; Arden exclaimed, that "he had no objection: but that he was not surprised at its having escaped his learned friend's memory, as every other person considered the bill to be a *private job*." With that stigma impressed on the measure, Fox, regardless of the sarcasm, bore it in triumph to the bar of the Lords.

The king's table, covered with badges of office, seals, wands, and gold sticks, profusely given in by the adherents of the dismissed ministers, presented an extraordinary spectacle. Among the foremost to testify his ministerial fidelity, the Honorable Charles Greville, next

brother to the Earl of Warwick, resigned his office of treasurer of the household. Possessing, like his uncle, Sir William Hamilton, an elegant mind, and a taste for many branches of the fine arts, which pursuit had carried him into expenses beyond the bounds of severe prudence; his resignation of such an employment could not therefore be to him in any sense, a matter of indifference. I have heard Mr. Greville, whom I very particularly knew, often say, that the king most kindly expostulated with him, when he entered the closet to lay down his place, and urged him by no means to commit an act so unnecessary; the treasurership of the household being, not a ministerial, but a personal situation in the family of the sovereign. I ought likewise to add that Fox, who well knew Mr. Greville's private embarrassments, had, with a liberality of mind truly noble, exhorted him to retain his post; absolving him at the same time from all considerations of a political kind. But his feelings of honour were too delicate, to permit of his following either the suggestions of convenience, the exhortations of Fox, or the expostulations of his sovereign. He retired for several years from court, and from public life, into comparative obscurity.

Lord Hinchinbrook, less scrupulous, and perhaps with better sense, instead of quitting his office of master of the buck hounds; though his father, the Earl of Sandwich, followed the fortunes of the *coalition*; wisely abandoned that obnoxious party, and declined to give in his resignation. Sir George Yonge went back to his office of secretary at war which he had held under Lord Shelburne's administration; a post that seemed to be hereditary in his family; his father, Sir William Yonge, having occupied it with much distinction, under the reign of George the Second. Sir William, who performed no inconsiderable part in the political annals of that period, was equally distinguished likewise in another line, among the men of wit, pleasure, and gallantry, Lady Vane makes honorable mention of him, in those Memoirs of her Life, which Smollet has inserted in the third volume of his "*Peregrine Pickle*." I have heard Lord Sackville say, who remem-

bered Sir William Yonge, that, when secretary at war, having waited officially on John, Duke of Argyle, then commander-in-chief of the forces, in order to make his report on a matter of business ; the duke kept him standing, while he himself remained seated for a considerable time. Their ministerial conference being ended, he immediately requested Sir William to take a chair. "No sir," replied he, "if the secretary at war is not worthy to sit down in the presence of the commander-in-chief ; it would be altogether unbecoming Sir William Yonge, to be seated in company with the Duke of Argyle." So saying, he abruptly quitted the room. Sir George Yonge, with whom I was much acquainted, did not want talents, and he maintained his place in a debate, though he possessed no pretension to eloquence : but in parliamentary capacity, I always considered him as inferior to his father.

[22d — 24th December.] Meanwhile Fox, who remained completely master of the House of Commons, where Mr. Pitt could not appear during the time necessary for his re-election ; might be said to sway with absolute power, the deliberations of that assembly. His first cares were directed to prevent either a prorogation, or a dissolution of parliament, by adopting resolutions calculated to render each of those proceedings difficult and dangerous to ministers. Having consented to pass the land tax bill, for which act of compliance with public necessity, he assumed no ordinary merit, as a proof of his superiority to all interested or factious views, he made a full display of his omnipotence within those walls. Nor could all the assurances given by Mr. Dundas from the treasury bench, though confirmed by Mr. Bankes, the friend and representative of the new first minister ; declaring by his express authority, that he would neither advise such an act of prerogative, nor would continue in office, if the crown had recourse to it ; prevail on Fox to allow of an adjournment for the Christmas recess, till he had voted, without experiencing any impediment, an address to the throne, of the most criminating nature, which was ordered to be presented by the whole house.

Affecting to consider Pitt as a mere creature of secret influence, the child of the back stairs, Fox treated Bankes's reiterated protestations in the name of the chancellor of the exchequer, with the most insulting and contemptuous levity or disregard. "As far as that gentleman's private character is concerned, said Fox, "I would readily take his word ; but to speak plainly, if I was, myself, in the situation which he now fills, knowing as much as I do of the power of secret influence, I would not ask any man to take my word. Because at the very moment when I might be engaged in declaring that parliament would not be dissolved, that very measure might be determined on, in consequence of secret advice. — It is the duty of the house to banish that pernicious and baneful agent, secret influence, for ever from about the throne." Bankes still pressing the point, and repeating, that "if any idea of proroguing or dissolving parliament should be entertained *anywhere*, Mr. Pitt would instantly resign ;" Fox replied, "I have no doubt that he might act spiritedly on the occasion : but what compensation could his resignation produce to the public for the evils which must result from a dissolution ? — There is not a moment to be lost ! and I hope that if any adjournment at all takes place, it will only be for a few days."

On receiving the king's answer, which, though gracious and conciliating in its expressions, did not breathe the less determination ; after passing upon it the most severe comments, as a mixture of duplicity and ambiguity, Fox then permitted of an adjournment for the short period of sixteen days ; an interval indispensably requisite to complete the ministerial arrangements. The resignation or dismission of the new administration, was however confidently anticipated by the party, and announced by Fox himself in one of his speeches ; — I think, on the 24th of December ; — when he ventured to predict, that its duration could not possibly exceed a few weeks. "The state of this country," exclaimed he, "will not admit of a long recess : — for, as the present ministers *cannot stand long* ; and indeed, to talk of the permanency of

such an administration, would only be laughing at and insulting them; it will become necessary to move for another set of writs, after the holidays, in the room of those gentlemen who must vacate their seats, on the formation of a new government. In order therefore to prevent the calamities that menace the Constitution, I would propose the shortest recess possible."—"It may be urged, that knowing, as I do, the ministry *cannot last*, I manifest an impatience to be restored to office. I do not *know* that I shall form one of the next administration; but I confess, I am impatient that the sense of the house may be speedily taken on the present ministers." So confident was he, indeed, or at least he pretended to be, of Pitt's inevitable dismissal, that he mentioned in a subsequent part of his speech, the *youth* of the chancellor of the exchequer, and the *weakness* incident to his early period of life, as the only possible excuse for his temerity in accepting office. How far Fox thoroughly believed his own predictions of his rival's imminent fall, may perhaps be questioned; but the most experienced members among them, with Welbore Ellis at their head, joined ostensibly in this opinion; which, it must be confessed, was built upon all the precedents known since the elevation of the House of Hanover to the throne.

Lord North, who had been absent, from the effect of indisposition, during a great part of the debates, while the East India Bill was in its progress through the House of Commons; made ample compensation for his short and involuntary retreat, by his presence and exertions after the dismissal of ministers. During the number of years that I sat with him in Parliament, I never witnessed a more brilliant exhibition of his intellectual powers, than on the 22d of December, when Erskine moved for an address to the throne, deprecating a dissolution. Indeed, from the instant he rose, till he concluded, almost every sentence teemed with the keenest wit, or with the most severe, yet delicate satire. In the commencement of his speech, Lord North justified by cogent arguments, his union with Fox, as having been dictated by state necessity and pub-

lic utility; eulogizing in animated language, the virtues, no less than the abilities, of his late colleague, whom he wished in future always to be designated as his "Right Honorable Friend." "Our political connexion," continued he, "was founded on principles of mutual honour. The great points of policy on which we had differed, being no more, we thought that without inconsistency we might cordially act together. The experiment has succeeded. No little jealousies have disturbed our union. All has been good faith on one part, and confidence on the other. No unworthy concessions were made by either side. I appeal to my Right Honorable Friend, if I ever renounced or sacrificed any opinion resting on principle, unless when the propriety of such renunciation became apparent from reason and argument. On the other hand I must declare in justice to him, that he never abandoned any principle which he maintained when in opposition to my government."—"We are charged with having *seized* on the reins of power. This, I confess, is a charge which I do not understand;—for, the country waited full six weeks, without having any administration. Every effort was vainly exerted to form a cabinet, and when all means failed, the ministers quitted their offices. The cabinet remained empty; so that if we *seized* on it, we could only have so done, by marching in after the garrison had fled; who, while evacuating the fortress, exclaimed, 'what a cursed *coalition* is this, which expels us from our situations!'—If, however, we did get possession of power, we at least carried it by storm, bravely, in the face of the enemy, not by sap. We made our advances above ground, in view of the foe. Not by mining in the dark, and blowing up the fort, before the garrison knew that any attack was meditated."

The ingenuity, pleasantry, and force of this eloquent defence, can hardly be exceeded. Then, after severely arraigning the mode of Pitt's admission into the cabinet, which he stigmatized as surreptitious and unconstitutional; he diverged with inconceivable humour into the path of ridicule, so analogous to his formation of mind. Alluding to the wish

expressed more than once by Mr. Martin (borrowed from Hotspur's invocation in Shakspeare), that a starling should be perched on the Speaker's chair, who might incessantly repeat the words, "Cursed *coalition*!" he observed, that so long as an honorable member of that house, "continued to pronounce those sounds, as if by rote, and without any fixed idea, let what would be the subject of debate; he conceived the starling to be unnecessary, inasmuch as the gentleman would make just as great an impression as the bird on his hearers." Having convulsed the house with laughter, by this severe, but ludicrous remark, he compared, or rather he contrasted, the conduct of the two men who were shut up in the Eddystone Lighthouse, during six weeks, with the opposite line of action embraced by Fox and himself. "Those men," said he, "from reciprocal enmity, preferred letting the fire go out, and beholding the navy of England dashed to pieces, rather than lend each other any assistance. But, we, animated by other and more enlarged sentiments, considered the preservation of the vessel of state, our primary duty; and, we agreed, that at all events, the fire in the lighthouse should not be extinguished." An allusion 'so ingenious, as well as felicitous, almost electrified his audience; and if wit could have supported or restored the *coalition*, it must, when falling from his lips, have overborne every impediment. But the moral impression made on the public mind, to their disadvantage, daily acquiring strength, finally completed their downfall, though the catastrophe was protracted for more than three months, by various circumstances.

[26th—31st December.] If the struggle for power had lain only between Pitt and Fox, the former of whom, whatever might be the extent of his talents, was unable to command a majority upon any question that arose in the House of Commons, while the latter carried every motion; the contest would, no doubt, have been soon decided. Or had the dispute been, as under Charles the First, between the sovereign, claiming to exercise prerogatives antiquated and oppressive, on the one hand, and the representative body

on the other, propelled and sustained by the people, as their organs and protectors against arbitrary violence, — the termination might have been foreseen without much penetration. But Fox, though he was become by his union with Lord North, master of the deliberations of the lower house, had sacrificed to that very union, in a considerable degree, the good opinion of the country; and the remains of his former popularity which survived his *coalition* with Lord North, had since been shipwrecked in the *India Bill*. He had, therefore, imprudently, though as it would nevertheless seem, reflectively engaged in a conflict where the crown and the nation both combined against him. Without the aid of the people, the sovereign would, indeed, have been powerless. As little could the House of Peers, unsupported by the public voice, have checked his career. It was their union which became irresistible. Fox, who, whatever his admirers may assert, possessed more genius, eloquence, and talent, than prudence or judgment, does not appear to have deeply weighed and appreciated these facts before he entered the lists. Unfortunately for him, too, the champion wanted by the crown, and who seemed to be expressly made for the conjuncture, presented himself in Pitt. His name, rendered illustrious by his father's public services; the decorum of his manners, so opposed to those of Fox; even his very youth, which should have operated against him, appeared to recommend him to national favour. The king availed himself of these aids to overwhelm the *coalition* under the ruins of the fortress which they had so nearly constructed, and fondly deemed inassailable. Only time was still wanting in order to enlighten, to awaken, and to animate the people at large; who not being as yet fully informed upon all the points of Fox's *bill*, required to be roused into exertion, before the last address should be made to them as electors.

I well remember, not more than a fortnight subsequent to the period of which I am now speaking, Governor Johnstone rising in the house;—I believe, it happened on the first day of their meeting after the recess, the 12th of January;—insisted with great force of reasoning, on

this point. I knew Johnstone well, consulted, and indeed acted in some degree of concert with him, throughout the whole progress of the *East India Bill*. He was not less attached to Lord North, than myself; but that amiable nobleman, as well as most accomplished statesman, no longer held the reins. Surrendering all his own volitions, he seemed to adopt those of his more active, as well as ambitious colleague:—for, assuredly, Lord North, if he had not been associated with Fox and Burke, would never, from the suggestions of his own judgment, or inclination, or opinion, have originated so strong and unconstitutional a measure. He was carried along by the torrent, and finally swept away in its course. Johnstone, addressing the House of Commons, expatiated on the rapacity, and other features of Fox's *Bill*. "It becomes," said he, "more detested from day to day, by the wisest and most impartial men throughout the nation, as the confiscating principle on which it is founded, and the artifice with which it has been carried on so far towards its completion, are more known and understood by all ranks. The rejection of so dangerous an experiment on the British Constitution, is regarded by every thinking individual, as one of the greatest triumphs over inordinate ambition, recorded in our annals. I do not assert that these sentiments have *as yet pervaded the lower orders of society*. The dangers arising from political or legislative institutions, when veiled by the arts and eloquence of superior statesmen, or of accomplished orators, are not immediately obvious to the wisest capacity, and make their way slowly to vulgar comprehension. Thank God, they are obviated for the present moment! But whether there exist sense and virtue sufficient in the country, to protect us from the machinations still carried on against the public freedom;—forms the great cause of that struggle, on which we are assembled to decide within these walls."

Pitt, with a judgment beyond his years, instead of prematurely dissolving the House of Commons, as a man of meaner talents, or of less resource, would have done; undertook the experiment of endeavouring first to conciliate, or to

convince, the majority; thus allowing the popular sentiment full leisure to expand, and finally to overpower all resistance: while he reserved for the proper moment, whenever it should be thoroughly matured, his final appeal to the country, by a dissolution. Such was the real state of affairs in the last days of December, 1783, at the time when Pitt, contrary to all precedent, and under apparent difficulties the most insurmountable, ventured to accept the reins of government.

It forms an object of the most natural and rational curiosity, minutely to survey him at this critical period of his life. He was not then much more than twenty-four years and a half old, and consequently had not attained the age, at which many individuals, under the testamentary dispositions of their parents, are still legally considered to be in a state of tutelage or minority. In the formation of his person he was tall and slender, but without elegance or grace. His countenance, taken as a whole, did not display either the fine expression of character, or the intellect of Fox's face, on every feature of which, his mind was more or less forcibly depicted. It was not till Pitt's eye lent animation to his other features, which were in themselves tame, that they lighted up, and became strongly intelligent. Fox, even when quiescent, could not be mistaken for an ordinary man. In his manners, Pitt, if not repulsive, was cold, stiff, and without suavity or amenity. He seemed never to invite approach, or to encourage acquaintance; though, when addressed, he could be polite, communicative, and occasionally gracious. Smiles were not natural to him, even when seated on the treasury bench; where, placed at the summit of power, young, surrounded by followers, admirers, and flatterers, he maintained a more sullen gravity than his antagonist exhibited, who beheld around him only the companions of his political exile, poverty, and privations. From the instant that Pitt entered the door-way of the House of Commons, he advanced up the floor with a quick and firm step, his head erect and thrown back, looking neither to the right nor to the left; nor favouring with a nod or a glance, any of the individuals seated

on either side, among whom, many who possessed five thousand pounds a year, would have been gratified even by so slight a mark of attention. It was not thus that Lord North or Fox treated parliament; nor from *them*, would parliament have so patiently endured it: but Pitt seemed made to guide and to command, even more than to persuade or to convince, the assembly that he addressed.

In the flower of youth when he was placed at the head of administration, he manifested none of the characteristic virtues or defects usually accompanying that period of life. Charles the Twelfth, King of Sweden, could not have exhibited more coldness, indifference, or apathy towards women; a point of his character, on which his enemies dwelt with malignant, though impotent, satisfaction; while his friends laboured with equal pertinacity to repel the imputation. To him the opposition applied, as had been done to his father, the description given of a Roman youth:

“*Multa tulit, fecitque Puer; sudavit et alsit;
Abstinuit venere.*” —

In order to justify him from such a supposed blank in his formation, his adherents whispered, that he was no more chaste than other men, though more decorous in his pleasures; and they asserted, that he made frequent visits to a female of distinguished charms, who resided on the other side of Westminster Bridge: but I never could learn from any of them, her name or abode. Pitt's apparent insensibility towards the other sex, and his chastity, formed, indeed, one of the subjects on which the minority exhausted their wit, or rather, their malevolence; as if it had been necessary that the first minister of George the Third, should be, like the chancellor of Charles the Second, “the greatest libertine in his dominions.” I recollect, soon after Pitt became confirmed in power, his detaining the House of Commons from the business of the day, during a short time, while he went up to the House of Lords; and as Mrs. Siddons was to perform the part of “*Belvidera*” that evening, when Fox never failed, if possible, to attend, seated among the musicians, in the orchestra at Drury

Lane, the opposition impatiently expected Pitt's return in order to propose an adjournment. As soon as the door opened, and he made his appearance, one of them, a man of a classic mind, exclaimed,

“*Jam redit et Virgo!*”

If, however, the minister viewed women with indifference, he was no enemy to wine, nor to the social conviviality of the table. His constitution, in which a latent and hereditary gout early displayed itself; which disorder, heightened by political distress, domestic and foreign, carried him off at forty-seven; always demanded the aid and stimulus of the grape. It was not therefore in him, so much a gratification or an indulgence, as a physical want, though he unquestionably yielded to its seductions, without making any great effort at resistance; resembling in this respect, a distinguished consular character of antiquity, relative to whose virtue Horace says,

“*Narratur et Prisci Catonis,
Sæpe Mero caluisse Virtus.*”

In the autumn of 1784, he had, indeed, nearly fallen a victim to one of those festive meetings, at which no severe renunciations were enjoined by the host, or practised by the guests. Returning by way of frolic, very late at night, on horseback to Wimbledon, from Addiscombe, the seat of Mr. Jenkinson, near Croydon, where the party had dined, Lord Thurlow, who was then chancellor, Pitt, and Dundas, found the Turnpike Gate situate between Tooting and Streatham, thrown open. Being elevated above their usual prudence, and having no servant near them, they passed through the gate at a brisk pace, without stopping to pay the toll; regardless of the remonstrances or threats of the keeper of the turnpike, who running after them, and believing them to belong to some highwaymen, who had recently committed depredations on that road, discharged the contents of his blunderbuss at their backs. Happily he did no injury. To this curious and narrow escape of the first minister, which furnished matter of pleasantry, though perhaps of rejoicing, to the opposition, allusion is thus made in the “*Rolliad* : ”

"How as he wandered darkling o'er the plain,
His reason drown'd in Jenkinson's cham-
paign,
A rustic's hand, but righteous fate withstood,
Had shed a premier's, for a robber's blood.

Probably, no men in high office, since Charles the Second's time, drank harder than Pitt's companions; as, in addition to the individuals already named, we should not omit the Duke of Rutland and Lord Gower, neither of whom professed or practised mortification. Once, and once only, the House of Commons witnessed a deviation from strict sobriety in the first minister and the treasurer of the navy; who having come down after a repast, not of a Pythagorean description, found themselves unable to manage the debate, or to reply to the arguments of the minority, with their accustomed ability. No illiberal notice or advantage was however taken of this solitary act of indiscretion. The house broke up, and it sunk into oblivion. Fox never subjected himself, either in, or out of office, to similar comments. He was always fresh; but the treasury bench, under the *coalition* ministry, had not wanted some noble advocates of the House of Howard, for the quick circulation of the bottle.

Pitt, at his coming into office, was soon surrounded by a chosen phalanx of young men, who participated in his triumph, pressed near him on a day of expected debate, and constituted the resource of his leisure hours. Powis, when describing about this time, "the forces led by the right honorable gentleman on the treasury bench," in his speech of the 9th of March, 1784, only a few days previous to the dissolution of Parliament; said, "The first may be called his body guard, composed of light young troops, who shoot their little arrows with amazing dexterity, against those who refuse to swear allegiance to their chief." High birth, personal devotion, and political connection, more than talents, formed the ordinary foundation of the minister's partiality for those distinguished individuals; most of whom, with only one exception, we have since seen elevated to the peerage, or loaded with preferments and sinecure appointments. In general, the Duke de Montausier's observation to Louis the

Fourteenth, when speaking of Versailles, "*Vous avez beau faire, sire, vous n'en ferez jamais qu'un favori sans mérite,*" might well apply to them. With Fox's associates and comrades, Hare, Fitzpatrick, and Sheridan, they could sustain no competition for mental endowments. Lord Grenville, then Mr. William Grenville, must not however be included in this remark. His near connection with the first minister, by consanguinity, when added to his distinguished abilities, placed him on far higher ground. As little will the observation apply to Lord Mornington, since created Marquis Wellesley; to the present Earl of Harrowby, then Mr. Ryder; or to Wilberforce: all three, men of undisputed talents.

In suavity of temper, magnanimity of disposition, and oblivion of injury or offence, Fox rose superior to Pitt. Even Dundas possessed far more liberality of character, as he manifested on many occasions. I have heard Fox, after dealing out the severest insinuations or accusations against Lord North, when that nobleman was at the head of the treasury, towards the end of the American war; on being convinced that he had exceeded the fair limits of parliamentary attack, or had deviated into personal abuse, explain, retract, and apologise for his violence or indecorum. Mr. Pitt, though he rarely committed such a breach of propriety, and was more measured in his censure or condemnation, seldom, if ever, made concession. He even tried, at an early period of his ministerial career, to overbear Sheridan, by making sarcastic allusion to the theatrical employments or dramatic avocations of that eminent member, as forming a more appropriate object of his attention, than parliamentary declamation and pursuits; — allusions, which, however classic the language in which they were couched, might be justly deemed illiberal in their nature. But Sheridan, with admirable presence of mind, turned against him his own weapons; leaving behind him the impression of his genius, drawn from the very key on which Pitt had pressed, when he applied to the first minister the denomination of the "Angry Boy," with which *Ben Jonson* furnished him on the instant.

In classic knowledge and acquisitions of every kind, as drawn from Greek and Roman sources, Pitt and Fox might fairly dispute for pre-eminence; but the latter left his rival far behind, in all the variety of elegant information derived from modern history, poetry, and foreign languages. We ought not, indeed, to be surprised at this superiority, if we recollect that Fox was above ten years older than Pitt, that he nourished a much stronger natural attachment to polite letters, and enjoyed infinitely more leisure for its indulgence. Pitt, as far as my means of information ever enabled me to form a judgment, possessed comparatively small general acquaintance with those authors, which furnish the libraries of men of taste and science. How, indeed, we may ask, should he ever have attained it? Several months before he completed his twenty-second year, he found himself, with a very slender fortune, placed in the House of Commons, which situation opened to his aspiring and ambitious mind, the most brilliant prospects of elevation. From that period, if we except the prorogation of 1781; — for in 1782, he was chancellor of the exchequer, and in 1783, he visited the continent; — what portion of time could he devote to literary pursuits or accomplishments? Near seven years later than the period of which I speak, in the autumn of the year 1790, when it was expected that a rupture would have taken place, between the crowns of Great Britain and Spain, respecting the affair of Nootka Sound; being alone with him in Downing-street, and conversing on the subject of the Spanish possessions lying along the shore of the Pacific Ocean, he owned to me that he not only never had read, but, he assured me, he never had heard of Commodore Byron's *Narrative* of his Shipwreck in the "Wager," on the coast of Patagonia: — A book to be found in every Circulating Library. But, on the other hand, the rapidity and facility with which he acquired, digested, and converted to purposes of utility, his knowledge, was altogether wonderful. With the French language he was grammatically conversant; but, at twenty-five he spoke it imperfectly, and wrote it without freedom or facility, though he

subsequently improved in these particulars. I repeat it, as a secretary of state for the foreign department, he could have sustained no competition with Fox, in all the branches of solid, or of ornamental attainment, that qualify for such a situation.

It is not easy to decide relative to their respective superiority in eloquence. Fox's oratory was more impassioned; Pitt's could boast greater correctness of diction. The former exhibited, while speaking, all the tribunitian rage; the latter displayed the consular dignity. But it must not be forgotten that the one commonly attacked, while the other generally defended; and it is more easy to impugn or to censure, than to justify measures of state. Had they changed positions in the house, the character of their speeches would doubtless have taken a tinge, though it would not have been radically altered, by such a variation in their political destiny. From Fox's finest specimens of oratory, much, as it appeared to me, might generally have been taken away, without injuring the effect, or maiming the conclusion. To Pitt's speeches nothing seemed wanting, yet was there no redundancy. He seemed, as by intuition, to hit the precise point, where having attained his object, as far as eloquence could effect it, he sat down. This distinctive and opposite characteristic of the two men, arose, partly at least, from an opinion or principle which Fox had adopted. He assumed, that one-third of his audience was always either absent, or at dinner, or asleep; and he therefore usually made a short resumption or epitome of his arguments, for the benefit of this part of the members. So that, after speaking at great length, and sometimes apparently summing up, as if about to conclude; whenever he saw a considerable influx of attendance, he began anew: regardless of the impatience manifested on the part of those whose attention was already exhausted by long exertion. Pitt never condescended to avail himself of such a practice; neither lengthening his speeches nor abbreviating them, from any considerations except the necessity of fully developing his ideas. Indeed, so well was the relative proportion of time generally taken up by the two speakers, on

great occasions, known to the old members, that they calculated whenever Fox was three hours on his legs, Pitt replied within two. In all the corporeal part of oratory, he observed, likewise, more moderation and measure than Fox; who on great occasions, seemed, like the Pythian priestess, "to labour with th' inspiring God," and to dissolve in floods of perspiration. The minister, it is true, became sometimes warmed with his subject, and had occasionally recourse to his handkerchief; but rather in order to take breath, or to recall his thoughts, by a momentary pause, than from physical agitation.

A vital defect in Pitt's composition as a man, must be esteemed his want of economy; it was hereditary, constitutional, and remained insurmountable down to the close of his life. The great Earl of Chatham, his father, had to contend with the same characteristic deficiency; and never understood, as Lord Holland had done, the art of accumulating a fortune. But the first Mr. Pitt, besides the lucrative sinecure of the privy seal, which he held during several years, enjoyed the estate of Burton Pynsent in the county of Somerset, bequeathed to him by Sir William Pynsent, together with a pension of three thousand pounds a year, bestowed on him by the crown. None of these possessions, however, descended to his second son, whose whole patrimonial inheritance amounted, I believe, only to five thousand pounds; and it never received any ostensible augmentation, except a legacy of three thousand pounds, bequeathed him in October, 1787, by the Duke of Rutland. We may, therefore, be enabled, with these data, to form some idea of the elevation of Pitt's mind, his contempt of money, and his disregard of every selfish or interested object; when, on Sir Edward Walpole's decease, in January, 1784, he disdained to take the clerkship of the pells in the exchequer, though, as the head of that department, he might have conferred it on himself; though Lord Thurlow pressed him not to reject such a fair occasion of rendering himself independent, and though every man in the kingdom must have approved the act, on an impartial survey of his situation. For he might

not have retained his official employments during a single week. Perhaps it is to be regretted that he should have made such a sacrifice of private interest to glory; but it operated throughout his whole life, and even beyond the grave, by its effect on parliament and on the nation. Antiquity cannot exhibit any more shining instance of disinterestedness, either drawn from Theban and Athenian story, or from the consular ages of Rome. Juvenal's observation on human nature,

*"Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam,
Præmia si tollas?"*

did not seem to apply to Pitt. Possibly, however, on a deep estimate, he found even his pecuniary recompense in this noble act of renunciation. The House of Commons would hardly have bestowed the posthumous marks of solid admiration and respect, which they voted in 1806, on any minister who had enjoyed during two and twenty years a sinecure place of three thousand pounds per annum, in addition to his official emoluments.

The salaries and other advantages annexed to the place of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, even though unaided by any private fortune, yet undoubtedly, with prudent management, might have been found adequate to Pitt's annual expenditure. But when unsupported by economy, they proved wholly insufficient for the purpose. When he was appointed first minister, his youngest sister, Lady Harriet Pitt, resided with him, and superintended his establishment in Downing-street. She possessed, in addition to other eminent intellectual endowments, that quality which her father and brother wanted; and so long as she personally controlled his domestic affairs, I have been assured that they were restrained within very reasonable limits. Unfortunately for him, in September, 1785, within two years after he came into power, Lady Harriet gave her hand to Mr. Elliot, who became Lord Elliot, on his father's demise; and subsequent to her marriage, Pitt's pecuniary concerns fell into the utmost disorder. Debts accumulated; and it was com-

monly asserted, that the collectors of the taxes found more difficulty in levying them from the chancellor of the exchequer, than from almost any other inhabitant of Westminster. Even tradesmen's bills, particularly those of coach-makers, were said to be frequently paid, not in money, but by ordering new articles, and thus augmenting the pressure of the evil itself.

It was not till 1792, on the Earl of Guildford's decease (better known to us as Lord North), that Mr. Dundas having learnt the intelligence, and knowing his friend's disinterestedness, hurried to St. James's, went into the closet, and asked of his majesty, the place of lord warden of Cinque Ports, for Pitt; which office the king immediately conferred on him, though it had been previously intended by the sovereign, as I know, for the late Duke of Dorset. Such was the superiority of the first minister's mind, to every object of personal emolument or acquisition, that he disdained to ask any individual reward, even from the prince whom he had so long and so efficaciously served. For my knowledge of this curious and interesting fact, I am indebted to the Right Honorable William Dundas, nephew to the late Lord Melville, whose authority on such a point, I presume, is superior to all contradiction. The salary, which in Mr. Pitt's person was rendered nominally three thousand five hundred pounds a year might have formed a very handsome addition to his official income; but the necessary deductions of many kinds to be made from that sum; the expenses which he incurred in altering or embellishing Walmer Castle; and more than both these sources of expenditure, his facility or liberality in granting small pensions to invalided or aged artificers, of various denominations, belonging to the Cinque Ports; so many combined causes reduced the real receipt below half its ostensible amount. Yet when he went out of office in 1801, loaded with debts, he possessed no other independent means of subsistence. It is indeed true, that as early as 1790, he had been elected master of the Trinity House; but I have always considered that appointment, though highly honorable, as unproductive of any pecuniary emolument. When we reflect

on the circumstances here enumerated, we may regret, but we cannot wonder, that after holding the reins of government almost his whole life, and conferring so many dignities, as well as offices, during a period, taken altogether, of near nineteen years, he should ultimately die not only poor, but oppressed under a burthen of debt. Yet must we distinguish between a sort of virtuous, or at least, venial poverty, if I may so express myself, caused by want of economy, in a man who devoted his exertions to the public service; and Fox's similar wants, produced by a rage for play, which not only reduced him from affluence to a state of dereliction, but finally compelled him to accept an eleemosynary contribution from his political and personal friends, in order to furnish him with the means of subsistence. It is unnecessary to contrast the two positions or characters, which undoubtedly excite in our minds very opposite sensations, and awaken widely different degrees of moral censure or disapprobation.

Pitt's great superiority over his antagonist, and his consequent ministerial success, flowed principally from two causes. The first was, his admirable judgment. That intelligence restrained his parliamentary exertions during the American war, and induced him, while heaping accusations on the ministers, to spare the king. I know that he received a hint, soon after he began to speak in the House of Commons, warning him to avoid that rock on which Fox had split, and to be cautious how he mentioned, or alluded with severity, to the royal name. He did not despise the advice. The same superior intelligence impelled him, when Lord North was driven from power, to refuse office under an administration, which, he foresaw, from its component materials, could only be of short duration. It dictated to him, to take the chancellorship of the exchequer under Lord Shelburne; but it equally suggested to him, the impracticability of retaining the situation of first minister, when pressed by his majesty in March, 1783, to assume that high office, after the Earl of Shelburne's resignation. In renouncing a situation so flattering to his pride and his ambition, though it lay completely within his grasp, he exhibited, when

not twenty-four, the deepest and calmest discernment: for if he had yielded to his own inclinations and the wishes of the sovereign, it seems certain that he could not have maintained himself in power against Fox and Lord North; who had not then committed any other act calculated to excite the public condemnation, except the mere approximation of their respective parliamentary adherents, followed by their own political union.

Pitt, with consummate judgment, waited till the *coalition* had brought forward the "East India Bill," and could no longer recede, in order to profit of their indiscretion. He accepted in December, the two employments, which, nine months earlier, he had wisely declined; exhibiting, on both occasions, equal ability: but he never associated Lord Shelburne to his power, nor allowed him a place in the cabinet. His whole conduct, while struggling against Fox's majority in the House of Commons, during successive months, which I witnessed, formed the triumph of paramount capacity over imprudent ambition and rapacious precipitation. If we were to pursue the comparison lower down in Pitt's life, we should trace the same effects resulting from similar causes, during the critical conflict which took place between him and Fox, in the winter of 1788; when the latter, instead of advising the heir apparent to accept the regency under any conditions, however apparently severe, on which parliament might think proper to confer it during the uncertain nature of the king's malady, laid claim to it for his royal highness, as a matter of right. The minister instantly perceived, and fastened, like an eagle, on his adversary's error; which, by producing delay, happily allowed time for his majesty's recovery, and of course perpetuated the duration of Pitt's power. But this part of his ministerial conduct, belongs to another period of the "Memoirs of My Own Time."

The second point that gave him an ascendant over Fox, arose from the correctness of his deportment, and regularity of his private life. This circumstance, which, under Charles the Second, would have counted for little in the scale, operated with decisive effect in his favour, under a prince such as George the

Third. Nor did it produce less beneficial results among the people at large. Some internal guaranty, drawn from moral character, high integrity, and indisputable rectitude of intention, seemed indeed necessary, in order to justify to the nation, the choice of the sovereign, when entrusting to a young man, destitute of property, the finances and concerns of an empire, reduced by a long and disastrous war, to a state of great depression. Pitt possessed in fact no other stake to deposit, as a security for his good conduct, unless we take into our calculation, his possible reversion of the Earldom of Chatham. He had likewise to contend, like Epaminondas in antiquity, with another deficiency. During the whole course of the eighteenth century, and I believe I may say, since the accession of Elizabeth, he is the only English first minister who lived and died in a state of celibacy. He was not therefore attached to the commonwealth by those endearing ties, which blend the statesman with the husband and the father; thus giving a species of compound pledge for exemplary conduct, to the country. Henry Pelham, who presided over the councils of Great Britain during ten years, under George the Second, was, it is true, like Pitt, only a younger son of a noble house; but his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, might be justly considered as one of the greatest subjects in fortune, as well as in rank, to be found within the kingdom. Mr. Pelham, who married a daughter of the Duke of Rutland, had likewise by her a numerous family, and possessed in his own person, considerable landed property.

Even Fox, though he remained long unmarried, yet finally entered into that state; and he aspired to have done it much earlier in life, if his efforts for the purpose had not proved unsuccessful. During the early part of Hastings's trial, in 1787, he raised his eyes and hopes to the Duke of Newcastle's box in Westminster Hall, where usually sat Miss Pulteney, afterwards created by Pitt, Countess of Bath in her own right; then justly esteemed one of the richest heiresses in the kingdom. After exhibiting his great powers of oratory, as a public man, in the manager's box below, he

sometimes ascended in his private capacity, to try the effect of his eloquence under the character of a lover. All his friends aided a cause, which, by rendering their chief independent in his fortune, would have healed the pecuniary wounds inflicted by his early indiscretion. General Fitzpatrick, with friendly solicitude, usually kept a place for him, near the lady; and for some time, the courtship assumed so auspicious an appearance, that I remember, *Hare*, when speculating on the probable issue of the marriage, said, with admirable humour, that "they would inevitably be duns, with black manes and tails;" alluding to the lady's fair complexion and red hair, contrasted with Fox's dark hue. The affair nevertheless terminated, from whatever cause, without success. Pitt, though, at different periods of his life, he distinguished certain ladies, some of whom I could name, by marks of great predilection; and in one instance seemed even to meditate marriage, yet never persisted in the attempt: but his name, descent, abilities, and private character, surmounted every impediment to his elevation. Fox could no more have been placed at the head of the treasury, than Dean Swift could have been made Archbishop of Canterbury; or than Lord Bolingbroke, under Queen Anne, or the Duke of Wharton, under George the First, could have filled the office of first minister. He wanted, like them, an essential quality. I will not say, high moral character; — for, I believe, his honour, integrity, and probity, were above all impeachment or reproach; but correct moral deportment. Of this deficiency he was, himself, sensible, and was said to have once expressed his conviction of it, in laconic, but forcible terms. I resume the progress of events.

While Pitt unquestionably anticipated the probable necessity for his ultimately recurring to the measure of calling together a new House of Commons; he by no means disdained to avail himself of all the means and modes that could be suggested, for diminishing, and if possible, annihilating the majority, to which Fox owed his actual consequence. Every effort was exerted by himself, and by his friends, in order to accomplish that point. The recess, limited to little more than a fortnight, allowed him only a very

short space for exertion; and the numbers which had hitherto supported the *coalition*, during the progress of the "East India Bill" through the house, in every stage generally amounted to double, or almost double the votes on the opposite side. Two hundred and seventeen members had voted for its commitment; a great proportion in an assembly, then composed only of five hundred and fifty-eight persons. To reduce such a superiority, first to something approaching an equality, and finally to a minority, might well seem a hopeless undertaking; even admitting all the venality, want of principle, or tergiversation, with which that assembly has been so often reproached. Much more success was, however, expected from applications addressed to the part of the *coalition* which might be considered as holding to Lord North; than from the adherents of the Rockingham party, or among the personal supporters and friends of Fox. Many of Lord North's political connexions, who had in fact voted with him on the India Bill, under a conviction of the measure itself having obtained the consent of the crown; were naturally disposed to withdraw their support, if not to transfer their services, on the discovery of their mistake. There existed only three ways by which Fox's majority might be reduced. In consequence of the attendance of new members, who had not hitherto taken any part. By the future non-attendance of those, who had supported the *coalition* up to the present time; and lastly, by desertion from the enemy's ranks, over to those of the new administration. The latter votes, as counting double, of course became most sought after and valued.

A separation had, indeed, already taken place among Lord North's immediate personal followers. Of the two former secretaries of the treasury, Sir Grey Cooper continued to support him invariably: but Robinson, conceiving himself absolved from any obligation to accompany his ancient principal, through all the consequences of his new political alliances, quitted altogether that party. No man in the House of Commons, as I have had occasion to remark, knew so much of its original composition; the means by which every individual at-

tained his seat; and in many instances, how far, and through what channels, he might prove accessible. Though Mr. Pitt made the fifth first minister, whom that parliament had beheld in the short space of little more than twenty-one months; yet the individual members composing the lower house, had undergone only a very trifling variation since the general election. Recourse was, therefore had to Robinson, under the present delicate and arduous circumstances of public affairs, in order to obtain his active exertions for government. He complied with the application, and unquestionably rendered very essential service. I have always considered the *Earldom* of Abergavenny, as the remuneration given by the crown, for that assistance, though I by no means assert it as a fact. Robinson's only daughter and child had been married some years before, to the Honorable Henry Neville, eldest son of Lord Abergavenny; who was placed at the head of the list of *earls*, created by Pitt, on the 11th of May, 1784, not five months after the facts took place, under our discussion.

While I am engaged on the subject of the House of Commons, and of the influence or corruption by which it has been always managed, particularly during the last, and a part of the present reign; I shall relate some curious particulars, which cannot perhaps be introduced with more propriety than in this place. We may see in the "Memoirs of Prince Eugene of Savoy" (which work, though composed under its present form, by the late Prince of Ligne, with whom I was well acquainted at Vienna, is founded on original papers or documents); what influence he attributes to the "presents of Champagne and Burgundy," made by Marshal Tallard, then a prisoner of war in England, to "Right Honorable Members of Parliament." Nay, the prince asserts positively, that in the same year, 1711, when he came over in person to London, with the avowed object of retaining, if possible, Queen Anne and her ministers, in the grand alliance against France; he had recourse, himself, to corruption. "*Je fis des présents,*" says he, "*car, on peut acheter beaucoup en Angleterre.*" If such constituted the ordinary practice

under the last princess of the Stuart line, at a time that parliaments were not septennial, but only *triennial*; we may be quite assured, that they did not become more virtuous after the accession of the reigning family, when the House of Commons was elected for seven years.

Proofs of the venality practised by Sir Robert Walpole, during the whole course of his long administration, it seems unnecessary to produce, as that minister did not disclaim or resent the imputation. Nor did his political adversaries disdain, whatever professions of public virtue they might make, to have recourse to the same unworthy expedients, in order to effect his removal. We have the authority of a member of their own body, for the fact. "*Don Carlos*" (Frederick, Prince of Wales), says Mr. Glover in his "Memoirs," recently published, "told me, that it cost him twelve thousand pounds in corruption, particularly among the Tories, to carry the Westminster and Chippenham elections in 1742, and other points, which compelled Lord Orford, at that time Sir Robert Walpole, to quit the House of Commons." It is difficult to adduce more satisfactory and unimpeachable proof of any fact, as Glover was a man of strict veracity. Neither was Mr. Pelham, who, after a short interval succeeded Sir Robert, and held his situation near eleven years; though he may be justly esteemed one of the most upright statesmen who presided in the councils of George the Second; less liable to the accusation of corrupting parliament, than was his predecessor.

A friend of mine, a man of rank and high character, whom I do not name, because, being still alive, I consider myself not at liberty to divulge it; but whose name would at once stamp the veracity and authenticity of whatever he relates; has frequently assured me, that about the year 1767, he was personally acquainted with *Roberts*, who had been secretary of the treasury under Mr. Pelham: but who was then old, infirm, and near his end. He lies buried in Westminster Abbey, in *Poet's Corner*, where his epitaph describes him, as "The most Faithful Secretary of the Right Honorable Henry Pelham." This gentleman conversing with *Roberts*,

upon the events of those times when he held a place under administration, and particularly on the manner in which the House of Commons was then managed; *Roberts* avowed without reserve, that while he remained at the treasury, there were a number of members who regularly received from him their payment or stipend, at the end of every session in bank notes. The sums, which varied according to the merits, ability, and attendance of the respective individuals, amounted usually from five hundred pounds, to eight hundred pounds *per annum*. "This largess I distributed," added *Roberts*, "in the Court of Requests, on the day of the prorogation of Parliament. I took my stand there; and as the gentlemen passed me, in going to, or returning from the house, I conveyed the money, in a squeeze of the hand. Whatever person received the ministerial bounty in the manner thus related, I entered his name in a book, which was preserved in the deepest secrecy; it being never inspected by any human being, except the king and Mr. Pelham. On the decease of that minister in 1754, his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, Mr. Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, and others of the cabinet, who succeeded to power; anxious to obtain an accurate knowledge of the *private* state of the House of Commons, and particularly to ascertain the names of all the individuals who received money during Mr. Pelham's life, applied to me for information. They further demanded of me to surrender the book, in which, as they knew, I was accustomed to enter the above particulars. Conceiving a compliance to be dishonorable, I peremptorily refused to deliver it up, except by the king's express command, and to his majesty in person. In consequence of my refusal, they acquainted the king with the circumstance, who sent for me to St. James's, where I was introduced into the closet; more than one of the above-mentioned ministers being present. George the Second ordered me to return him the book in question, with which injunction I immediately complied. At the same time taking the poker in his hand, he put it into the fire, made it red hot, and then, while we stood round him, he thrust the book

into the flames, where it was immediately reduced to ashes. He considered it in fact, as too sacred and confidential a register, to be thus transferred over to the new ministers, and as having become extinct with the administration of Mr. Pelham."

It is unquestionable that the Duke of Newcastle, though he failed in getting possession of his brother's secret information, in consequence of *Robert's* firmness; yet pursued the same mode of management, on becoming himself, first lord of the treasury. Under Lord Bute's government, when, from a variety of causes, a violent opposition in Parliament arose, which required the whole power of ministry to stem, similar practices were carried to a greater length. John Ross Mackay, who had been private secretary to the Earl of Bute, and afterwards, during seventeen years, was treasurer of the ordnance; a man with whom I was personally acquainted; frequently avowed the fact. He lived to a very advanced age, sat in several Parliaments, and only died, I believe, in 1796. A gentleman of high professional rank, and of unimpeached veracity, who is still alive, told me, that dining at the late Earl of Besborough's in Cavendish Square, in the year 1790, where only four persons were present, including himself; Ross Mackay, who was one of the number, gave them the most ample information upon this subject. Lord Besborough having called after dinner, for a bottle of excellent champagne, a wine to which Mackay was partial; and the conversation accidentally turning on the means of governing the House of Commons, Mackay said that "Money formed after all, the only effectual and certain method." "The peace of 1763," continued he, "was carried through and approved by a pecuniary distribution. Nothing else could have surmounted the difficulty. I was, myself, the channel through which the money passed. With my own hand I secured above one hundred and twenty votes, on that most important question to ministers. Eighty thousand pounds were set apart for the purpose. Forty members of the House of Commons received from me a thousand pounds each. To eighty others, I paid five hundred pounds a-piece."

Mackay afterwards confirmed more than once, this fact, to the gentleman above-mentioned, who related it to me. He added that Lord Besborough appeared, himself, so sensible of the imprudence, as well as impropriety of the avowal made by Mackay, at his table : that his lordship sent to him, and to the fourth person who had been present on the occasion (the late Reverend Mr. Dutens), next morning, to entreat of them, on no account to divulge it during Mackay's life. What attestation so strong of the truth of this anecdote can be produced, as the testimony of the late Bishop of Llandaff ! He expressly informs us, in the "Anecdotes" of his life, just published, that the Earl of Shelburne, then first minister, assured him on the 17th of February, 1783, that "he," Lord Shelburne, "well knew, that above sixty thousand pounds had been expended (among the members of the House of Commons), in procuring an approbation of the peace of 1763."

Wilkes was, however, perfectly well instructed on the subject, and made no secret of his information, even at the time when the treaty of Fontainebleau was a recent transaction. In his memorable letter addressed from "Paris, 22d October, 1764," to the Electors of Aylesbury, he says, "I will not compliment the present profligate majority in the House of Commons, so far as to say, they were so well informed, that they knew the exact truth of *every* assertion in the 'North Briton,' No 45. *One* particular, however, came within their knowledge ; the means by which it is hinted that the *entire approbation of Parliament*, even of the *preliminary articles* of the late inglorious peace, was obtained ; and the previous step to the obtaining that *entire approbation*, the large debt contracted on the *civil list*. They knew this assertion was extremely *true*, and I am as ready to own that it was extremely *scandalous*." It is impossible to convey a charge of such a nature, in less equivocal or ambiguous language.

Relative to the three successive administrations, after Lord Bute's secession from power ; namely, that of George Grenville, of the Marquis of Rockingham, and of the Duke of Graf-

ton, which comprised the whole period of time between April, 1763, and January, 1770, I can state nothing from my own personal knowledge. Bradshaw conducted that department, as is well known, under the Duke of Grafton. The same system certainly continued to be acted on during the period of the American war, when Robinson, and under him, Brummell, were its agents. I remember, Mr. Whitbread, with whom I was well acquainted, one of the most upright, honest, and benevolent men who ever sat in Parliament, at that time member for Bedford ; rising in his place, on the 19th of March, 1782, stated to the house, that during Lord North's administration, many millions had been lost to the nation, by exorbitant contracts, and wasteful bargains. "Some of the former," added he, "are so lucrative, that even though thousands of pounds might be given for them, yet they would produce a large profit. I do not charge the noble lord at the head of the treasury, with ever receiving one penny of such money. I believe he never did : but, *the individuals who transacted those matters at the treasury, are well known*." Nor is it any secret, to whom the contracts in question are given, by favour or preference. That all the business of the treasury, admiralty, navy, victualling, and ordnance, is conducted on the same corrupt principles, is a fact beyond dispute." Lord North was not present when Mr. Whitbread spoke ; but no denial of these allegations was made or attempted by any of his friends.

Burke on the following day ; — a day memorable in the reign of George the Third, as on it Lord North laid down his power ; — observed in the metaphorical and elevated style familiar to him, "We have witnessed, Mr. Speaker, for numerous years, the system of corruption advancing. We have beheld it with melancholy and depression. For, from the prodigious power of that corruption, from the towers and battlements with which it was fortified, we nourished no hopes of being able to overthrow it. We remained therefore, from our dejection, inactive. Despair rendered us submissive. This torpor gave to the enemy additional force. It even gave them an

appearance of stability, by which delusive advantage, weak men were seduced to join them, and wicked men became "confirmed in their adherence." Such was the language held at that time, within the walls of the House of Commons. I incline nevertheless strongly to doubt whether, towards the termination of Lord North's ministry, these practices subsisted in all their force; by which I mean to say, that I question whether any individual member of the house, was paid for his vote and support in bank notes; as it would appear had been done under Walpole, Pelham, and most, if not all their successors, down to that time. More refinement had insensibly been introduced into the distribution of pecuniary gratifications; which were conveyed in oblique shapes, such as lottery tickets, scrip, jobs, contracts, and other beneficial forms, by which the majority was kept together, for near seven years, in defiance of a most unfortunate, if not an ill conducted war.

Sawbridge, who without the learning or the talents of Algernon Sydney, possessed as republican a spirit as that illustrious and unfortunate individual, put a case hypothetically, in the course of one of his speeches, which the house perfectly understood. I was present on the occasion, which happened in March, 1781, under Lord North's administration, during the discussion of the loan negotiated in that session. Sawbridge's words were nearly these: "Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, it may chance at some future period, — for, the age is too virtuous to admit its possibility in these days; — that a member of Parliament may retire behind the Speaker's chair with the first lord of the treasury, and engage to support him on all questions, provided he (the member), shall be allowed to subscribe for ten thousand pounds of the present loan." Lord North, when Sawbridge sat down, instantly rose, in order to answer and to deny, or to refute other passages of his speech: but to the allusion above cited, he made no reply, nor attempted to rebut such an imputation; probably because he knew that Sawbridge, if contradicted, could name his man. Neither was he called to order for it. Indeed, Fox, Burke, George Byng, and others of the opposition of

that period, made no scruple of advancing similar charges, without circumlocution or delicacy. Sir George Savile, on the 12th of June, in the same year, 1781, exceeded in severity, or rather in asperity, anything that I witnessed; and he did it with perfect impunity. After branding the loan recently negotiated, with the epithets of venal, corrupt, and disgraceful, he added, that "such a measure constituted an act of *plunder and robbery* committed on the nation, in order to *bribe with the spoil* those members of the house, who persisted in a *conspiracy* for the destruction of their country. The minister might just as well say in plain terms to his followers, I know that you disapprove this ruinous and accursed war with America: but as it is indispensable to prosecute it, for the preservation of my employment, provided you consent to raise thirteen millions on your constituents, I will allow you to share one million of the money among yourselves, who are my *accomplices*." Not a word was said from the treasury bench, nor any indignation expressed at so unqualified an accusation.

Fox observed no measures, when declaiming against the asserted corruption of Parliament. "The minister," exclaimed he, "well aware, that he must die with the present war, has encountered shame and embraced it, in order to produce its continuance. His supporters well know that *their payment, like his own bread*, depends on its prosecution. The war begets extraordinaries, which beget loans, which beget douceurs, which beget members of this house." Such was the language of opposition in 1781. I heard Fox pronounce those words above cited. In thus endeavouring to vilify and degrade the first minister, he only looked to the immediate object of overturning the administration; unconscious within how short a time he should be induced to form a *coalition* with the very nobleman, whom he had denounced for successive years, as the destroyer of his native country. In February, 1782, Burke, pleading the cause of Hohen, the Jew, who had suffered in his property, at the capture of St. Eustatius; Jenkinson, secretary at war, demanded, "what was the specific object that he had in view?"

Did he mean to move for a grant of public money to the petitioner?" If so, he entreated Burke to reflect on the consequences to which such a precedent would lead. "Oh!" answered he, "ministers may easily make compensation to Mr. Hohen, without putting their hand in the public purse. *They may give him a slice of the loan*; for those profits are not esteemed public money; or, *they may place him en croupe of some overgrown contractor.*"

One of the most humiliating scenes that I ever witnessed, as affecting Lord North in his ministerial capacity, and which occasioned him the greatest embarrassment, took place just at the time when Burke made these severe animadversions. A contract of a most improvident nature had been concluded with a member of the house, an East India director, one of the two representatives for a Somersetshire borough, by the board of ordnance. The article furnished was saltpetre, for which a very exorbitant price was given to the contractor. George Byng, aided by Hussey, and by Colonel Barré, with most meritorious and indefatigable pertinacity, traced, developed, and exposed the whole transaction. Lord Townsend, then master-general of the ordnance, disavowed any knowledge whatever of it, by the mouth of his friend Courtenay, and reprobated the business. Under these distressing circumstances, the first minister had no other refuge or means of extrication, than to protest his total ignorance of the contract, the terms of which he admitted to be enormous; and he therefore proposed to omit the article of saltpetre, amounting to near £150,000, if the house would vote the remaining articles of the ordnance estimates. Fox launched out on the occasion into severe, as well as indignant comments, on the chancellor of the exchequer's conduct. No reply was made by Lord North, and on the question being put for receiving the report, ministers carried it only by a majority of *thirty*; the respective numbers being 122 and 92.

Lord North, when first minister, was supposed to command full one hundred and seventy members at his absolute devotion, who were prepared to vote

with him upon every question; nor would his head, indeed, have been secure, from 1777 down to 1782, unless he could have counted upon such a steady and numerous support, at a time when every month teemed with misfortunes or defeats. Of this great body, only a comparatively small portion had, however, continued to adhere to him, after he joined with Fox; and many more had quitted him on the first introduction of the "India Bill," or subsequent to its rejection. Still, even in the last days of December, 1783, when dismissed from employment, he remained the nominal head of a considerable party; upon many individuals composing which it was natural to suppose that an impression might be made, by representations addressed to their principles, their passions, or their interests. Nor can Mr. Pitt, standing as he did, in the critical, as well as hazardous predicament of having accepted the first offices of government, unsupported in one House of Parliament, be blamed for availing himself of every fair or honorable means, to diminish the majority possessed by his adversaries. I am at the same time persuaded, from the elevation of his mind, and the purity of his principles, that he was incapable of authorising, no less than Robinson would have disdained to practise, any other methods of procuring adherents, than such as the British Constitution either recognizes, or which are in fact inseparable from its practical existence.

Among the persons of eminence to whom Mr. Pitt had recourse for support, at this delicate crisis of his ministerial life, when every parliamentary aid which could sustain him against the *coalition*, was anxiously sought after, the late Lord Sackville attracted much attention. That nobleman had hitherto taken no decided part in the debates, during the progress of the "East India Bill;" though he voted against it personally in both the divisions which took place on the 15th and 17th of December, in the House of Peers. He had, indeed, early considered it to be a measure which would excite great fermentation throughout the country, as well as opposition on the part of the crown, when its political consequences came to be well appreciated and

understood. He even repeatedly predicted, that it would probably overturn the ministry of Lord North and Fox. Impressed with these sentiments, he exhorted his nephew, the Duke of Dorset, who arrived in London from Paris, soon after the session opened; to be cautious how he engaged himself too far in supporting it, till he had ascertained and sounded the ground. The duke profited of the advice. Lord Sackville, besides his own vote, and his brother-in-law Lord Milton's proxy, of which, from his influence over that nobleman's mind, he might be said to dispose, in the same House of Parliament; brought in gratuitously two members at East Grinstead; for, he had a mind too noble ever to *sell* either of the seats; — thus commanding or influencing four votes, in addition to his own personal weight and connexions.

I cannot pass over Lord Milton, who was afterwards created Earl of Dorchester, without saying a few words respecting himself and his family. He descended collaterally, if not directly, from Damer, the famous miser, whom Swift has commemorated; and Lord Milton had attained a very advanced period of life, at the time of which I now speak. Neither his person, nor his manners, were attractive; but though difficult of access, reserved, and repulsive in his exterior, he possessed solid intellectual parts; and no man of his high rank in the kingdom, entertained with greater magnificence. In his youth, the duel which he fought with Earl Paulet, had rendered him scarcely less distinguished, than Lord Byron became in consequence of his fatal encounter with Mr. Chaworth; and neither the one, nor the other, remained exempt from reflections on the circumstances supposed to have respectively taken place. If Lord Byron was tried by his peers, Lord Milton underwent scarcely a milder inquest, from the prejudices imbibed respecting the transaction. At his seat of Milton Abbey in Dorsetshire, where he maintained a gloomy and sequestered splendour, analogous to his character and habits, he had made immense landed purchases; which exhausting his pecuniary means, extensive as they were, reduced him to a species of temporary distress, and realized Horace's

“Magnas inter opes inops.”

His palace in town, contiguous to Hyde Park, from the secluded life which Lord Milton led, and the very limited number of persons who ever entered within its gates, obtained the denomination of “Milton's Paradise Lost.” His very appearance conveyed indeed an idea of “dry and bald antiquity,” misanthropy, and inaccessibility: but when he occasionally unbent himself in select society, his conversation was interesting, often witty, and sometimes cheerful. Of his three sons, I had the honour to know only the second, who succeeded his father as Earl of Dorchester, and was one of the most engaging, lively, but eccentric noblemen of his time. It is difficult to convey an idea of the species of humour that characterized him, which was truly original, and irresistibly comic; nor did he commonly impose any severe restraints on its indulgence. Lady Melbourne passing him, one very cold day, in her carriage, as he stood conversing with *Partington*, an eminent solicitor, at the corner of Lower Brook-street, Grosvenor Square, she bowed to him. Unwilling to take off his own hat in the severe state of the atmosphere, he instantly made free with that of *Partington*; who having his back towards Lady Melbourne, was not a little surprised at finding himself thus made the involuntary instrument of Mr. Damer's good breeding. Having however performed this act of civility by proxy, he coolly replaced *Partington's* hat on the head of its owner, with many apologies for the freedom. He survived his father only a few years, and dying unmarried, a martyr to the gout, the title of Earl of Dorchester expired in his person. I resume the thread of public affairs.

During the Christmas recess, after the adjournment of the two houses, Lord Sackville went down to his seat at Drayton. Mr. Pitt having applied to a member of the House of Peers, requesting his exertions to procure Lord Sackville's personal attendance and support in that assembly, at a moment of such difficulty; he mentioned my name to the minister, as a person capable, from the friendship with which Lord Sackville honoured me, of facilitating his

wishes on the subject. The nobleman in question, subsequently called on me, at a very late hour of the night, of the 29th of December, after I was in bed, and acquainted me with the above-mentioned circumstances. Impelled by the wish of serving Mr. Pitt, and supporting his majesty's government, I waited on him, next morning, at his brother Lord Chatham's house in Berkeley Square, where he then resided; and at his desire undertook the service. But I candidly informed him at the same time, that, from my knowledge of Lord Sackville's political sentiments, and for the obvious reasons which must render Lord Howe, as well as the Marquis of Carmarthen, who were both members of the new administration, personally distasteful to him; I doubted his compliance, unless the solicitations were sustained from various quarters. And I exhorted him, not only to write himself, to Lord Sackville, but to procure similar applications from his three personal friends in the cabinet; the chancellor, the lord president, and Lord Sydney. Mr. Pitt readily adopted the suggestion. I then assured him that I would set off on the following day; it being previously settled, that the messenger, who was to be charged with the ministerial letters for Drayton, should not pass me on the road, but allow me to arrive before him at my destination.

On the ensuing morning, being the 31st of December, I left London very early, in order to have time for conversing with the Duke of Dorset, in my way to Lord Sackville. The Duke was then on a visit at Lord Salisbury's, at Hatfield. I acquainted him with the object of my journey, in the success of which he co-operated with all his exertions. It was past ten at night when I reached Drayton, in most inclement weather. Lord Sackville, whom I found engaged at chess with his youngest daughter, expressed some surprise at my first entrance into the apartment. But his natural penetration soon led him to conceive, that my visit at such a season, must have originated in a deeper motive than friendship or amusement. As soon as we were alone, I therefore told him the cause of my unexpected arrival, and related every circumstance that had taken place, except the advice which I

had ventured to offer Mr. Pitt, respecting applications from his friends in the cabinet. Next day, the messenger brought the despatches; and Lord Sackville, after perusing them, returned the answer which I had foreseen; namely, that "though he neither desired, nor would accept any office under ministry, nor ask any favour from the new administration, either for himself, or for his connexions; yet, that his principles, and the dutiful submission that he felt towards his majesty, would impel him to give every support to the government, in the present arduous crisis of public affairs." He punctually performed this promise, evincing himself a steady friend to the ministry, during the whole future progress of the eventful contest then carrying on in Parliament.

[1784.—1st—10th January.] It was not, however, by individual applications of any kind, nor even by private exertions and assistance, however successful they might be, nor even by the personal interference of the sovereign himself, that Mr. Pitt could have been maintained in office. The public, and the public only, enabled him to defeat the powerful phalanx drawn up against him. During the two first weeks of December, while the fate of the "India Bill" remained still doubtful, the committee of proprietors, which sat unintermittingly in Leadenhall-street, sounded the alarm from one end of the kingdom, to the other extremity. A member of that committee, who took an active part in their deliberations, assured me, that in the circular letters which they addressed to almost every town, or corporate body throughout Great Britain; they contented themselves with saying in few words, "Our property and charter are forcibly invaded: look to your own!" This laconic invocation bore some analogy to one of the puritanical appeals made under Charles the First, to the English people, when, in the language of Scripture, their leaders exclaimed, "To your tents, O, Israel!" A copy of Fox's *bill*, enclosed, which served as the best commentary on the text, soon produced corresponding and general effect. Ridicule and satire joined their aid to expose the *coalition* to laughter or contempt. Two prints in particular, both conceived

with admirable humour, were circulated throughout the metropolis. In one, Fox, under the character of a "political Sampson," appeared carrying away on his shoulders the India House, that he had pulled down; out of the windows of which edifice, the terrified directors were endeavouring to effect their escape. The other print, denominated "The triumphal entry of Carlo Khan into Delhi," displayed the secretary of state, habited in the costume of a Mogul Emperor, seated on an elephant, whose countenance bore a most striking resemblance to Lord North; and preceded by Burke, as his trumpeter. It is difficult to conceive the moral operation, and wide diffusion, of these caricatures, through every part of the country.

Towards the commencement of the new year, the first minister exhibited (perhaps not without profound design), a proof of power, which his predecessors had never been able to display during their administration; by elevating his relation and active supporter, Mr. Thomas Pitt, to the peerage. Burke, only a few days afterwards, alluding to the circumstance, in the course of one of his speeches, observed, "A person who was very recently a member of this assembly, has just been,—not transported,—but translated to a place of rest; the House of Peers; which place, Lord Chesterfield used sometimes to denominate the Hospital of Incurables, or of Invalids.—The person whom I mean, is Lord Camelford, who, like Elijah, has been rapt up into the heaven of rest. To whom, he has left his *cloak*, it is not my business to enquire." Then having read several passages from a pamphlet, attributed to Mr. Thomas Pitt, in which production, the constitutional right of the House of Commons to advise the sovereign was strenuously maintained, and eloquently enforced; Burke added, "Perhaps this pamphlet may be considered as his *cloak*, which he has left to his disciple on the treasury bench." Pitt, who was present, did not condescend to notice such an attack.

Before the month of January elapsed, two other individuals, namely, Mr. Carteret, brother of Lord Weymouth: and Mr. Eliot, member for Cornwall, whose eldest son married Lady Harriet Pitt, in

the course of the subsequent year; were raised by him to the same dignity. He probably meant to show his adherents, as well as his opponents, in the House of Commons, the facility with which he disposed of the honours of the crown, withheld by the sovereign from the *coalition*; and consequently, the rewards which might attend their early repairing to the royal standard. In order to counteract this display of ministerial favour, and with a view to keep their forces together, his antagonists were said to have promised a long list of contingent British peerages, exceeding thirty in number, to their principal friends in the lower house. The names of these gentlemen were in general circulation; and the greater part of them have since, at different periods subsequent to the French revolution, received from Pitt the boon, which they had failed to obtain from the coalition administration.

[12th January.] Whatever favourable effect, the peerage conferred by the minister on Mr. Thomas Pitt, might produce within the walls of the House of Commons; an act which he performed soon afterwards, operated far more beneficially for him without doors, on the minds of the public. Sir Edward Walpole's death having vacated the lucrative post of clerk of the Pells in the exchequer; Pitt, instead of taking it for himself, or conferring it on his brother Lord Chatham, as might not only have seemed natural and venial, but as he was urged to do by his political friends; immediately gave it to Colonel Barré, in order to extinguish the ample pension enjoyed by that gentleman ever since Lord Shelburne's accession to power. So unusual a proof of superiority to pecuniary temptation, exhibited by a man destitute of patrimonial fortune; even though it might have originated in deep policy, more than in disinterestedness, as his enemies asserted or insinuated; yet attracted just admiration and extorted general applause. Fox, nevertheless, while he admitted the abstract merit of the action itself, did not reprobate with less severity, the principles on which Pitt had acquired possession of office. Nor did he display with less ostentation, on the day when the House of Commons met, after its short ad-

jourment, the unlimited command that he exercised over the majority of that assembly. Of this empire he gave the most convincing proof, by not only, in parliamentary language, taking possession of the house when it re-assembled, but by precluding the chancellor of the exchequer, in subversion of all usage, from being heard, though charged with a message from the king, till Fox had submitted and carried five resolutions, in a committee on the state of the nation. Three of these he moved himself. The other two he delegated to Lord Surrey, who was said to have been selected from among the numerous candidates for parliamentary service, in consequence of a classic recommendation. It having been agitated at the meeting of the opposition, held on the preceding evening at Burlington House, what individual to choose for bringing forward two of the resolutions next day in the House of Commons; and opinions being divided on the subject, Sheridan, when asked for his sentiment, exclaimed with *Richard*,

“Saddle black *Surrey* for the field to-morrow!”

Throughout the whole debate which took place on that occasion, Fox appeared as the arbiter of the scene, propelling, restraining, and directing the machine, according to his volition; while the minister, sustained only by the vast powers of his mind, and a consciousness of possessing equally the royal and the popular favour, struggled vainly against the current. He was borne away, together with his followers, by its violence; after making an eloquent and masterly, but ineffectual appeal to the candour of his audience. Erskine, who performed a conspicuous part during the discussion of that memorable night, was placed, if I may so express myself, by Fox in the front ranks. In the course of a long speech, he drew a parallel, or rather a contrast, between the late secretary of state, and the actual first minister. The latter, he depicted as devoured by an insatiable thirst of power, and throwing into confusion the whole frame of government, in order to attain the highest offices of state, without passing through any subordinate employments. “How differ-

ent,” continued he, “has been the progress of my honorable friend! *He* was not hatched at once into a minister, by the heat of his own ambition. *He* passed through the inferior gradations, and matured his talents in long, as well as laborious opposition; arriving by the natural progress of his powerful mind, to a superiority of political wisdom, universally felt and acknowledged.” The parody which he drew from the fourth scene of the third act of “*Hamlet*,” intended to display Pitt under two opposite points of view; first, as a patriot, when formerly united with Fox, and next, as the creature of secret influence, did not, however, appear to produce on his hearers the same strong impression which the citations from “*Julius Cæsar*” had done, when applied to Fox by Scott and by Arden. Powis, though he continued to speak of the late *East India Bill*, in terms of the strongest abhorrence, as a measure, which, if it had not been frustrated, would have inflicted a mortal blow on our constitutional frame; yet expressed his ardent wish, that the state might not lose the benefit of Lord John Cavendish’s integrity, and of Fox’s resplendent abilities. “It would immortalise,” he said, “the individual who could effect a reconciliation, and produce a union, between the late secretary, and the present chancellor of the exchequer.” Widely different was the language held by Mr. Pulteney and by Governor Johnstone. Those two brothers, acting to a certain degree in concert, extended an invaluable assistance to the new administration. The elder, Mr. Pulteney, who represented Shrewsbury, under a very forbidding exterior, and a still more neglected, or almost threadbare dress, which he usually wore, concealed strong sense, a masculine understanding, and very independent, as well as upright principles of action. Nor did he want a species of eloquence, though it could boast of no elegance or ornament. Representing, in consequence of his marriage, the name and family of *Pulteney*, so eminent under the reign of George the Second; inhabiting the mansion of the celebrated Earl of Bath, in Piccadilly; and heir matrimonial to that distinguished nobleman’s vast landed pro-

perty, Pulteney was always heard with attention.

Fox, in a speech of the most inflammatory and criminating description, having rung the changes upon secret influence, concealed advisers, and all the apparatus of the *back stairs*, by which he accused his rival of having unconstitutionally ascended to power, and having strenuously exhorted the house to adopt measures without delay, for preventing the possibility of their own dissolution, Pulteney rose. "The present moment," observed he, "calls on every man to come forward, and I do not hesitate to assert, that far from approving resolutions calculated to prolong the duration of this assembly; I think, whenever it is suspected that the House of Commons does not speak the sentiments of the people, it ought to be dissolved. That suspicion is strongly entertained at this time, because the house has passed a *bill* which is reprobated by the nation. I will even go farther, and maintain, that the more violent are the resolutions into which they enter, with a view to prevent their dissolution, the more ought their political extinction to be accelerated. Much obloquy and clamour have been excited relative to secret influence. But even if it existed, I see no injurious consequences to be apprehended from its operation:—for as every measure advised, can only be carried into effect by efficient ministers, they must be devoid of all honour or spirit if they would execute measures not their own. On the other hand, he must be a dastardly minister, who, finding Parliament engaged in prosecuting measures odious to the country, would hesitate to advise their dissolution. And does any man doubt, that a House of Commons may speak a language opposed to the sentiments of the country? The support which the noble lord in the blue ribband found within these walls, during successive years, when prosecuting the American war, may convince the most incredulous person. I do not scruple to declare, that the administration just dismissed from power, formed a blockade round the sacred person of the sovereign, and endeavoured to despoil him of every attribute of majesty, except its external decorations, or its empty pageantry."

Those opinions which Pulteney always maintained with stern severity, but in temperate language, Governor Johnstone enforced with the violence of manner and tone, characteristic of his natural disposition. "Instead," exclaimed he, "of admitting that the horrors and rapacity of the East India Bill, produced its rejection in the upper house, the late secretary tells us that it proceeded entirely from secret influence. But what proof of the pretended fact does he adduce? None. It is merely the catch-word of a party, invented to delude the credulous vulgar, and to render the sovereign, or his servants, unpopular. The same cry was raised against the noble lord in the blue ribband; but he now protests that no such influence ever existed, to his knowledge. Indeed he must either confess that such was the case, or subscribe to his own meanness in submitting to it. What stronger attestation can be given that it is chimerical, since the noble lord, though now acting in perfect concert with his late colleague, and willing to avail himself by every expedient, of the clamour of the hour; yet when called on to speak from his own personal experience while first minister, declares the accusation to be totally groundless?—The present proceeding appears to me to have been open and avowed, not concealed. A noble earl, convinced of the fatal consequences which must have resulted from the East India Bill, both to the sovereign and to his fellow subjects; is said to have demanded an audience, in which he fully explained them to his majesty. The nobleman in question having related the purport of this interview, and its operations on the royal mind, to various of his friends, a resistance was set on foot to oppose the passage of the measure itself through the upper house. A change of administration naturally and properly followed. What! are we to deny the king the privilege of conversing with his own subjects and nobles! If so, we deprive him of the power of dismissing his ministers."—"We have doubtless a right to demand that the government shall be entrusted to men of ability and integrity. But if these qualities are found in the present cabinet, and if the measures which they propose,

appear to be wise, it is the height of factious to refuse our support to such men."

Stimulated by the personal attacks made upon him, not only by Fox, but from various other quarters of the house; all accusing him of the attainment of power through secret influence, and demanding an unequivocal explanation of his intentions relative to the dissolution of Parliament; the chancellor of the exchequer now came forward in his own person. Having denied in the most positive terms, the allegations advanced to prove his unconstitutional attainment of office, "I declare," continued he, "that I came up no *back stairs*. When my sovereign was pleased to send for me, in order to know whether I would accept of employment, I was compelled to go to the royal closet; but I know of no secret influence. My own integrity forms my protection against such a concealed agent; and whenever I discover it, the house may rest assured, I will not remain one hour in the cabinet! *I will neither have the meanness to act upon advice given by others, nor the hypocrisy to pretend when the measures of an administration in which I occupy a place, are censured, that they were not of my advising. If any former ministers are hurt by these charges, to them be the sting!* Little did I conceive that I should ever be accused within these walls, as the abettor and tool of secret influence! The nature and the singularity of the imputation, only render it the more contemptible. This is the sole reply that I shall ever deign to make. The probity and rectitude of my private, as well as of my public principles, will ever constitute my sources of action. I never will be responsible for measures not my own, nor condescend to become the instrument of any secret advisers whatever. — With respect to the questions put to me on the subject of a dissolution of Parliament, it does not become me to comment on the expressions composing the gracious answer of the sovereign, delivered by him from the throne. Neither will I compromise the royal prerogatives, nor bargain it away in the House of Commons!"

This speech, the dignity, elevation, and firmness of which, it is not easy to

appreciate fully, when we reflect that it was pronounced by a minister, in an assembly of which his adversaries possessed a decided majority; called up Lord North. I think I never saw him so much agitated, except once, when Barré was the cause. He could not indeed remain silent under imputations so severe and pointed, as were those levelled at him by Pitt. With more indignation than was natural to him, he repelled the charges of *meanness* and *hypocrisy*: — accusations, which, he said, were the most gross and scandalous that he had ever heard within the walls of that house. Sheridan retorted on the chancellor of the exchequer with still greater asperity; applying to his ministerial conduct, the very epithets which Pitt had used, when addressing Lord North. Rigby even indirectly accused the minister of putting a fallacy into the sacred mouth of majesty, with intention to deceive that assembly. Alluding to the late answer from the throne, to the address of the Commons, he observed that "a Newgate solicitor, he was persuaded, would not have descended to so low and scandalous a mode of deception, if any intention existed of dissolving Parliament, after the assurances to the contrary given by the king." One of Lord Surrey's motions, calculated to stigmatize his majesty personally, as having permitted "his sacred name to be unconstitutionally used, in order to affect the deliberations of Parliament;" was voted by a very considerable majority, in a crowded house, at seven o'clock in the morning. Yet, even amidst so conspicuous a triumph, Fox might find subject for just apprehension, in his already diminished numbers. Instead of dividing, as he had done before the recess, nearly *two to one* upon almost every question, he carried the first division against administration, upon "going into the committee on the order of the day," by only *thirty-nine*; though four hundred and twenty-five members voted on the occasion. Lord Surrey's resolution passed, it is true, by *fifty-four*; but as only three hundred and thirty-eight persons voted on that question, it appeared evident that the augmentation on the side of opposition, arose from the better discipline and closer attendance enforced among their

followers, than was observed by the adherents of government. When Fox, elated by his advantage, attempted, four days afterwards, on the 16th of January, to make the house declare, that "the continuance of ministers in office, was contrary to the principles of the Constitution," he found his majority declined to *twenty-one*, on a division where three hundred and eighty-nine members voted. His parliamentary ascendancy, therefore, however apparently imposing, palpably rested on a most precarious and decaying foundation.

[16th January.] Some features of this discussion, which took place on the state of the nation, were of a nature to make a deep impression on the memory. I have already mentioned, that during the existence of the *coalition* administration, intentions had unquestionably been nourished, of transporting Lord North to the upper House of Parliament: — intentions, the accomplishment of which was frustrated by the king. Powis, during the debate in question, having expressed his anxious wish, that a union might take place between Pitt and Fox; after passing very high encomiums on both, as men of transcendent abilities, fitted for the government of a great country, added, "I do not, however, approve of the coalition between the late secretary of state, and the noble lord in the blue ribband. The ambition of the former, is indeed laudable in itself; but, I believe he is not delicate about the means of its gratification. I perceive likewise plainly, the difficulty of inducing the two right honorable gentlemen to act together: — for the noble lord must not be disgraced. He shines indeed no longer, except with a borrowed light. He is a man of whom I cannot say, *laudandus*; but *ornandus, tollendus*. I would that such could be the case." Lord North, in the course of his speech, having alluded with great good humour, to Powis's observations, however painful, on his shining with a borrowed lustre; observed, that a classic expression had been applied to him, though with the difference of a monosyllable; — *non laudandus*; — *ornandus — tollendus*. "I hope," continued he, "*tollendus* is not to be understood in the worst sense. It is not meant to *kill* me. It is only intended

that I should be *ornandus*: — in vulgar English, *kicked up stairs*. But, sir, I feel no inclination to be kicked up stairs. I should be very unwilling to stand in the way of any political agreement which might be beneficial to the country; yet I will not go up to the House of Peers. I will remain in this assembly, for the purpose of defending my honour and character. If in the course of nature, such an event should indeed take place, I shall esteem it a very great distinction. I mean, provided the present ministers will suffer this house to retain its appropriate privileges in the British frame of Constitution. If they do not suffer any Constitution at all to survive, then I will repair to that house, as to a place of rest, a place of sleep, where I may repose during the rest of my life. But, neither my honour nor my character will allow me at present to accept of a peerage. Its acceptance would place me in Agrippina's situation, when she says, '*Je vois croître les honneurs, et tomber mon crédit.*'" So much suavity, taste, and wit, did that most amiable, as well as accomplished nobleman, usually mix up with his addresses to Parliament!

He had not many imitators; — for, never, I believe, were debates conducted with more asperity and personal recrimination, than during the period of Pitt's and Fox's contest for power. Accusations the most futile and unbecoming in their nature, were preferred on both sides, with the view of rendering each other odious to the nation. Sir Richard Hill, member for Shropshire, animadverted with some severity, on the frequent attendance, and marks of warm interest exhibited by the Prince of Wales, while present in the lower house. "Whatever censure may be lavished on *secret* influence," observed he, "*corrupt* influence must necessarily be pernicious. The former may produce possible benefit. The latter never can, under any circumstances. What might be the consequence, if it should happen that *an heir apparent attended the debates of this assembly, and endeavoured by his looks or gestures, to countenance a faction, and to influence individual votes?* Might not such conduct be esteemed a species of corrupt influence?" A very general cry of *order!* accompanied with

testimonies of disapprobation, arising from various parts of the house ; Lord Melbourne, who then occupied the place of a gentleman of the bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, declared that the words spoken, amounted to a direct attack on his royal highness, and therefore he should demand proof of the alleged fact. Sir Richard replied, that "the prince to whom he alluded, was only a supposititious personage." Lord Delaval, on whom the *coalition* ministers had conferred an Irish peerage, only a few months earlier ; and who was raised to the British peerage by Pitt, about two years later ; -- a nobleman with whom I had the honour of being much acquainted, and whom I may have occasion to mention again in some part of these Memoirs ; -- rose to remark, that "the Prince of Wales acted most wisely in attending debates, for the purpose of imbibing just ideas of that Constitution, which must probably at some future day be placed under his protection, as its natural guardian." But Hill, not at all disconcerted, calmly answered, that "for such purposes as those just mentioned, he could have no objection to his royal highness's appearance in that house." Here the conversation terminated.

The prince, though from deference to his father's wishes, signified to him, he had absented himself on the day when "the East India Bill" was finally rejected in the upper house, yet did not the less retain and avow his predilection for its authors. His presence in the House of Commons, among the Peers, where he took his place under the gallery, might therefore be considered as indirectly encouraging to Fox and the *coalition*. Frederic, Prince of Wales, his grandfather, had, however, as is well known, given the same marks of partiality to the minority which drove Sir Robert Walpole from power, in the beginning of 1741, without exciting any comment or disapprobation. Pulteney, then at the head of opposition, even alluded in one of his speeches, to his consciousness of the august personage before whom he spoke. Sir Richard Hill, whom I very particularly knew, was one of the most upright, disinterested, and honest men who ever sat in Parliament. Andrew Marvel was not more incorrupt ; but his

religious cast of character laid him open to the shafts of ridicule. His manners were quaint and puritanical ; his address, shy and embarrassed. He possessed however a most benevolent disposition, together with a great estate, which enabled him to gratify his generous and philanthropic feelings. Sir Richard, though he attained to old age, being, I believe, seventy-five at the time of his decease, remained always unmarried. In the simplicity, singularity, and eccentricities of his character, as well as deportment, he always reminded me of Addison's Sir Roger de Coverley. The "Rolliad," which treats him with severity, describes him as

"Friend of King George, but of King Jesus more."

In the same manner the Earl of Dartmouth, while a member of Lord North's cabinet, being likewise known to entertain very deep sentiments of religion, had obtained from the opposition of that time, the nick-name of "the Psalm Singer."

The indecorous personality of debate that distinguished the lower house, during this extraordinary crisis of affairs, produced scenes apparently unbecoming the assembly where they originated, and such as we would vainly expect to find in more tranquil periods of our parliamentary history. General Ross, a man of very eccentric manners, rising in his place, accused a lord of the bedchamber, the Earl of Galloway, with endeavouring to influence his vote, by allusions or direct intimations of the royal displeasure at his supporting the *coalition*. Lord Galloway's brother, the Honorable Keith Stewart, read a written denial of the assertion : but the general persisted in maintaining the charge. He had served with great gallantry and distinction, under General Eliott, during the memorable siege of Gibraltar ; where he commanded the troops employed on the 27th of November, 1781, in the *sally* made from the garrison with such success, when the lines and batteries of the besiegers were burned or destroyed. This extraordinary attack on Lord Galloway, was commonly denominated "General Ross's *sally*." Lampoons, a weapon,

in the management of which, the opposition unquestionably excelled their opponents, were circulated with great assiduity and effect. In one of them, Stewart was thus apostrophized :

“ Captain Keith, Captain Keith,
Keep your tongue in your teeth,
Lest you bedchamber secrets betray !
And if you want more,
Why, my bold commodore,
You may borrow of Lord Galloway.”

Keith Stewart, who was a captain in the royal navy, had incurred, as a professional man, some censure or reflections, perhaps very unjustly, during the war with Holland, for having allowed a homeward bound Dutch ship of war to slip through the Downs, and reach the Texel, while he was said to have been on shore at Deal. His brother, Lord Galloway, having, like Lord Sandwich, the inside of his mouth most defectively furnished for purposes of mastication, it was well known, used a complete set of artificial teeth. Sir Richard Hill, accustomed almost always to draw his allusions or authorities from Holy Writ, endeavoured to prove that even benefits might result from secret influence, by adducing the instances of Haman and of Mordecai. “ The honest Israelite,” he observed, “ repaired privately to court, and averted the danger which threatened the people of God, from Haman’s ambition ; who being driven from the cabinet, was finally suspended on a gibbet.” I thought, however, at the time when Sir Richard pronounced this speech, that Pitt was not perfectly pleased with the comparison made between himself and Mordecai. Even Dundas, who might have been esteemed incapable of descending to such modes of attack ; yet, when referring to Lee’s very imprudent assertion, made, I think, on the 12th of January, that “ a charter was only a scroll of parchment, with a piece of wax dangling to it ;” observed, that it had been asked with equal reason, “ What was the great harm of hanging an attorney general ? An hanged attorney general, was only a carcase dangling at the end of a rope.” Sheridan, however, retorted on him with equal ability and severity, for this curious metaphor. Lord North did not scruple to accuse the ministers with can-

vassing for votes, from one extremity of the kingdom to the other :—an imputation repeated in still stronger language by General Conway, who denominated their agents, *rat catchers* ; but which charge was repelled by the chancellor of the exchequer, as wholly destitute of proof. On the other hand, Rigby complained that Robinson, in the anticipation of a speedy dissolution of Parliament, had made use of ministerial influence, to affect the future election of a member for the borough of Harwich ; though he did not think proper to ground any specific motion on his complaint.

Fox, alluding to the reflections which had been thrown out by Sir Richard Hill, on the Prince of Wales, for attending questions under agitation in that house, exclaimed with warmth, “ God forbid that royal personage should not participate in its political concerns ! Where can he so well imbibe a knowledge of the principles of our Constitution, as within these walls ? How can he better illustrate the excellence of his character, than by thus blending personal respect for the king his father, with attachment to his country ?” Not deterred however by such observations, from animadverting on other circumstances connected with his royal highness’s persona appearance under the gallery ; the new treasurer of the navy remarked hypothetically, that “ if the great personage in question, not content with merely listening to the debates, should on any occasion testify by his behaviour or gesticulations, while in the house, a predilection or partiality for any set of men ; such marks of his preference would be unbecoming, and might operate as a means of influence.” No answer was given by any member of the opposition, to the supposed case thus stated : but Lord North, in the course of the evening, after expatiating on the eminent virtues of the heir apparent, expressed a becoming admiration at “ his attending the House of Commons, where he might imbibe the true spirit of our Constitution, and become acquainted with the nature of this limited government, rather than listening to flatterers. The comments on this delicate subject, proceeded no further, and were not renewed during the remainder of the Parliament.

[23d January.] The city of London led the way to the rest of the kingdom, by going up at this juncture to the foot of the throne, with an address, thanking his majesty for the very interference, which the House of Commons had pronounced to be subversive of the Constitution. They retorted at the same time, upon the authors of Fox's India Bill, the charge of "raising a power unknown to this free government, and highly inimical to his safety." Encouraged by such unequivocal demonstrations of the affection of the metropolis, and of the corresponding defection in the opposition ranks, Pitt had already framed and brought forward another East India Bill, the second reading of which took place at this time. All the faculties of the two great leaders, who had originated those respective measures, were exerted in its attack and its defence. Fox, after contrasting its pretended inefficiency and fluctuation of system, with the vigour which characterised his own measure for the government of our Asiatic possessions, concluded by protesting, "If the present *bill* is adopted, the company may continue to transmit orders to their servants. They may fill their despatches, with morals and with ethics; but all their commands will be perused with indifference, and treated with disrespect. *If adopted, I do not hesitate to assert that India is lost, irrecoverably lost for ever.*" This most unfortunate prediction was not however meant so much for futurity, as calculated to operate on the apprehensions of his audience. The chancellor of the exchequer, with more attention to the patience of the house, briefly pointed out as dangerous, as well as unconstitutional nature of the power, proposed by Fox to be vested in Lord Fitzwilliam, independent of the crown; dependent on the good graces of the ministers who could command a majority in Parliament." The division took place before midnight, when Pitt's *bill* was rejected only by *eight* votes, out of four hundred and thirty-six persons who divided. Such, indeed, was Fox's consciousness of these victories finally terminating in defeat, that no sooner had he thrown out the bill of the minister, than he moved for leave to introduce his own bill a second time; but so

changed and modified in its leading principles, as to be scarcely recognisable for the same measure. He unquestionably perceived when too late, the error into which his own ill regulated ambition, propelled by Burke's ardent and theoretical spirit, had precipitated the party. In order, therefore, to conciliate the favour of the house, and of the country, to the measure, he now offered to abandon almost all its obnoxious provisions; particularly the patronage, which had excited so much obloquy and clamour. There remained only two fundamental principles or features, which he declared himself unable to retract, namely, the permanency of the system for the government of India, under parliamentary, not royal authority; and secondly, that the supreme control itself should be established, not on the Ganges, but here at home. The proposition however, appeared to be no longer suited to the exigency. It is impossible not to accuse Fox of betraying want of judgment throughout every part of the transactions which led to his ministerial downfall. A cautious, or a temperate statesman, would not have furnished the sovereign to whom he was personally unacceptable, with the means of precipitating him from the elevation which he had attained with so much labour. Had the *coalition* made a judicious and moderate use of their power, the king, however he might have lamented his situation, could not have liberated himself from their yoke. They enabled him, by their errors, to emancipate himself. When we reflect that another coalition, formed by Lords Grenville and Grey, uninstructed by experience, renewed and exhibited in 1807, nearly the same error, followed by the same results, it affords no common matter of astonishment.

After the rejection of the minister's bill for the government of India, Fox, sustained by members in various parts of the house, endeavoured to force from Pitt an explicit declaration of his intentions relative to a dissolution of Parliament; but neither menaces nor expostulations could prevail over his determination to observe a profound silence on that point. He resembled a rock against which the waves dashed and spent their force. To General Conway, who ac-

cused him of attaining power by unconstitutional means, and existing by corruption, he replied with great dignity, but refused to answer any interrogatories from individuals. "I will be the sole judge of my own honour," said he, "and though I have not been long accustomed to the strong language used within these walls, yet neither unsupported slander, nor intemperate threats, shall discompose my temper." Vainly Fox exhausted his indignation on the minister's "sulky silence, and want of decency towards the house." With as little effect, Lord Surrey pledged himself, if Pitt persisted in denying the information demanded, to bring forward a motion of a compulsory, or a criminating nature. Lord North and Sheridan each assailed him with every weapon of debate; while Martin, notwithstanding his avowed detestation of the *coalition*, declared that on this occasion he could not support administration; but would abandon them if the threatened resolution should be brought forward. Pitt remained immovable. It was a moment of crisis; the majority irritated, clamorous, and ripe to have come to a vote of a violent nature. But Fox, who well knew that any such act would only furnish a momentary triumph, followed by the destruction of his parliamentary machinery, interposed with apparent moderation. "Perhaps," observed he, "the minister conceives that because he has insulted this house to such a point, he may proceed still farther. I am, nevertheless, averse to take any intemperate advantage of his conduct." He, therefore, proposed an adjournment of a few hours, till 12 o'clock of the same day (Saturday, 24th of January), expressing his hope that a full attendance should then take place. His expectations were realized; for I have rarely witnessed a greater number of members than assembled on the occasion. Powis instantly rising, with marks of strong and visible emotion, reiterated Fox's question of the preceding night; but Pitt, though he no longer declined making any reply, yet was with difficulty induced to guaranty the existence of the House of Commons, even for eight and forty hours. With that slender assurance of their duration, they instantly adjourned.

Notwithstanding the rising indignation of the capital and the country, which every day manifested itself with augmenting energy, in favour of administration; yet the minister's situation at this juncture, equally painful in itself, as it was without precedent in our parliamentary history, appeared to be at times not wholly exempt from personal danger. Fox might be said, without either metaphor or exaggeration, to hold suspended over his head the severest marks of the indignation of an offended House of Commons. His removal from the king's presence and councils, as an enemy to his country; his impeachment, or his commitment to the Tower; any, or all of these propositions, might probably, nay, might certainly have been carried, in moments of effervescence, when the passions of a popular assembly, inflamed by such a conductor as Fox, seemed to be ripe for any act of violence. The irritation and impatience produced by debates, protracted or repeated night after night, rendered his followers susceptible of impressions the most hostile to the minister; who, in sullen majesty, or in contumelious silence, heard, unmoved, their clamorous denunciations, seated calmly on the treasury bench. Mr. Pitt displayed in that situation, during successive weeks, a combination of fortitude, self-possession, presence of mind, and ability, which I never recollect without admiration. He did not, indeed, manifest the suavity, amenity, and wit, of Lord North, or of Sheridan. But always preserving the command of himself, he was never led into deviations from caution and prudence, even when he seemed most to set at defiance, the menaces of his adversaries. If we reflect on his period of life, our surprise is augmented. He constituted, indeed, in himself, the administration which he defended; and which, without him, could not have been maintained for a single week in existence.

It may naturally be asked, why Fox, holding in his hand so powerful an engine as the majority of a House of Commons, which assembly, he well knew, might every day be dissolved; and the individual members composing which superiority, he saw diminishing after almost every debate or division, in con-

sequence of the natural operation of a variety of obvious causes; yet should never have let fall its vengeance on the head of the minister, whom he apparently held in his power? Why, when he saw all the ordinary expedients exhausted or ineffectual, which might compel the king to dismiss his administration, or induce the ministry to resign; did he tamely wait, till Mr. Pitt's measures being ripe, and the country having declared almost unanimously on his side, a dissolution reduced the *coalition* to insignificance, and overwhelmed their ill-concerted schemes for perpetuating their authority? Fox wanted neither vigour, decision, nor inclination, to have anticipated his own approaching fall, and the extinction of his ambitious plans. Nor could he deceive himself relative to the political destruction which impended over the *coalition*, if they did not prove victorious in the actual contest. How then, and on what principles of common sense, are we to explain this seeming contradiction in his conduct?

Fox possessed no absolute certainty in the first place, whatever he might believe, that the same majority which had supported him in voting remonstrances to the throne, would either stop the supplies, or carry up an address for Mr. Pitt's removal. Various country gentlemen already called for a union, and thought that no administration from which he should be excluded, would be found equal to the national emergency. Even many of Fox's supporters among them loudly deprecated all extremities. They might abandon him. He might therefore be left in a minority, and all his consequence, as the head of a great party, would thus be lost by one imprudent step. But granting, however, as seemed most probable that he should carry a personal question against Mr. Pitt, by ten, twenty, or thirty votes in a crowded house; what would be the inevitable effect of such a victory? That the king, sustained by the voice of the country, and not susceptible of fear, when he believed himself to be acting right; instead of dismissing his ministers, would dissolve the Parliament, and confidently appeal to the people, against their own representatives. In that case, Fox, far from attaining his object, would

only have accelerated a dissolution; and would afford to his antagonist, a plausible, if not a solid excuse, for advising the sovereign to adopt that measure. These were unquestionably, the real causes of Fox's seeming moderation. Nor did Pitt, on the other hand, want motives equally powerful in restraining him from any precipitate movement. The county members who supported him, were adverse to a dissolution, unless circumstances rendered it indispensable. By temporising and protracting, however irksome, and even in some degree humiliating, might be considered his situation in Parliament; he gave time for the public sentiment to be loudly, as well as generally pronounced, and could avail himself of it at any moment. Such were the considerations which mutually withheld the two chiefs from proceeding to extremities, till the natural and unavoidable progress of affairs, produced the final consummation.

[26th January.] The idea of endeavouring to reconcile two men, who combined in their characters, almost all the great endowments fitted for government; if it could be realized, seemed apparently pregnant, at first view, with incalculable benefit to the country. Some individuals of respectability in the House of Commons, impelled by these feelings, undertook the experiment. As early as the 20th of January, the idea was suggested from various quarters, in the course of debate; but neither Fox nor Pitt, though both affected to consider it as an object highly desirable, pretended to think it practicable without a sacrifice of principle. Fox fairly avowed that he entertained very little hope of seeing such a union effected, as could prove a blessing to the country. The chancellor of the exchequer professed a similar conviction, and stated it in still plainer language. "I am by no means averse," observed he, "to the union so strenuously and so respectably recommended; but, I agree with the right honorable gentleman (Fox), that such a union, not founded on principle, would only prove fallacious, and would produce disunion in a quarter where it must be attended with worse consequences to the state, than can result from our disputes in this assembly."

Marsham, while he coincided in sentiment with the two preceding speakers, yet expressed his warm satisfaction at the assurances which they gave, of their mutual disposition to act together for the public extrication. But Powis, with more discernment, exclaimed, "A union of abilities has been loudly called for within these walls. I rather wish to see a union of principle. The former may produce discordant counsels, and feeble measures. The latter must have opposite results."

In fact, however specious the project appeared in theory, it proved impracticable, and only served to demonstrate the futility of the attempt. The St. Alban's tavern became the scene of this parliamentary drama, to which place repaired about sixty or more members, distinguished for high character, large property, and acknowledged uprightness of intention. Though they chose Mr. Thomas Grosvenor, brother to the peer of that name, and one of the representatives for the city of Chester, as their nominal chairman; their deliberations and proceedings were chiefly conducted by two gentlemen, who had already on various occasions, taken a lead in the debates carried on within the walls of the house. The first, the Honorable Charles Marsham, son and heir of Lord Romney, himself member for Kent; though a man by no means prepossessing or engaging in his manners, which were coarse and inelegant; yet wanted not ability, and attracted deservedly general consideration in his parliamentary capacity. The other, Mr. Powis, whom I have had so often occasion to mention, and who commonly prefaced his speeches, on occasions of great interest, by a copious discharge of tears, which he seemed to command at will; challenged attention from his recognised integrity, eloquence, energy of mind, and impartiality.

The Duke of Portland, as nominal head of one party, and Pitt, as leader of the other, affected equally to receive with deference, the propositions made to each, on the part of the associated members. It is probable, however, that the duke, in this profession, might be more sincere than the minister. Difficulties and objections, either to a personal interview, or to a negotiation, were started in turn

by both. Pitt refusing to resign, or even to hear of a *virtual* resignation, which was required of him, as a previous step to any conference for the purpose of forming an extended administration; the overtures were suspended, and finally broken off, in consequence of these preliminary impediments. But the patriotic zeal of the St. Alban's meeting, was not to be overcome by ordinary obstacles; and they returned to the charge some time afterwards, apparently under more propitious auspices. In compliance with their suggestion and wishes, the king was even induced, towards the end of the month of February, to send a message to the Duke of Portland, recommending a conference between him and Pitt, with a view to constitute a ministry, on "a wide basis, and on *fair and equal* terms." Instead of instantly closing with such a proposition, from which, neither the sovereign, nor the chancellor of the exchequer, whatever might have been their secret wishes, could easily recede, without incurring the imputation of insincerity; the Duke of Portland and Fox thought proper to cavil about the acceptance of the term "equal." At this opening, with which they injudiciously furnished him, Pitt escaped, by refusing to define any expressions, before the proposed interview.

All further efforts were therefore ultimately abandoned, with a view to produce a political union between two men, whose mutual animosity and rivalry seemed to derive new force, from the unsuccessful attempts made to effect a reconciliation. With whatever complacency and ostensible alacrity, Pitt invariably received the propositions for such a junction, it is difficult to persuade ourselves that he could cordially desire their accomplishment. He beheld the prize for which they were contending, nearly attained and secured. His ambition impelled him to govern alone, without an equal and a coadjutor in the cabinet, of such energy as Fox. Even their recriminations in Parliament, which had been so acrimonious and so recent, seemed hardly to admit of being buried in instant oblivion, without a mutual sacrifice of principle. We are warranted therefore, in believing, that an accommodation, forced on both by imperious

circumstances, would have proved hollow, insincere, and of short duration. They appeared to be not formed for acting together as members of the same administration; nor did they ever openly coalesce for an instant, during their whole remaining lives. The French revolution itself, which successively brought over to government, as to an asylum against the evils of a sanguinary anarchical republic, so many other eminent individuals, at whose head were the Duke of Portland, Burke, and Windham, could never induce Fox to quit the opposition bench. He remained fixed there above two and twenty years, till death liberated him from his antagonist; and he then only became a minister, when, perhaps unfortunately for his country, his own career drew to its close.

During the debate of the 26th of January, in answer to the charges brought against him by Fox, who called on him to resign his unconstitutional power, as a necessary preliminary to any union; the new first minister replied with equal dignity and force of expression. He seemed, indeed, to feel not the slightest apprehension from the indignation or the votes of his antagonist's majority. "I came into office," observed he, "to fulfil the duty which I owe his majesty, whose confidence I have not forfeited by any experiment for introducing a new power or estate into the Constitution." "I consider myself as aggrieved; since, wholly untried in my ministerial capacity, I lie under the censure of a resolution of this house: but I have at least the consolation to reflect, that in proportion as the present cabinet becomes more known, its members rise in the confidence and esteem of Parliament, as well as of the people. I may appeal for the truth of my assertion, to the decaying majorities of the opposition.—Not that I am inimical to a reconciliation or a union, which has been so strongly recommended; but, in order to accomplish this object, all personal views or prejudices, all pride and punctilio, must be laid aside. The right honorable gentleman has insisted on the entire resignation of the present ministers, previous to any negotiation. But though I occupy an employment of eminence, it is not

one of choice; and I trust, whenever the occasion calls for it, I shall approve myself neither tenacious of power, nor improperly attached to office. I act from patriotic, not private views: but my sense of public duty compels me to retain my actual situation, till another arrangement can be formed; and not to suffer this great country to be again plunged into a state of anarchy, accompanied with the absence of all government, as we experienced on a recent occasion. The inflexibility and determination manifested in Pitt's speech, left little rational prospect of accommodation.

[2d—10th February.] The discussions which took place in the House of Commons, between the termination of January, and the middle of the ensuing month, though equally violent and acrimonious with the preceding debates, contained less matter of interest, or of novelty. Accusations, levelled against the "East India Bill," from the treasury bench; or against secret influence from the opposite side; began to weary their hearers, and made little impression. Fox continued, it is true, master of the deliberations of the lower House of Parliament; his majorities sometimes falling as low as nineteen, and at other times rising to thirty-one: but this precarious superiority was far overbalanced by his decline in the popular esteem. No eloquence, nor any exertions of sophistry, could reconcile the public to his union with Lord North, followed immediately by the introduction of a measure, obviously calculated to cement their political power at the expense of the crown, which it must have reduced to a state of insignificance or vassalage. During the course of the debate which arose on the 2d of February, when Mr. Grosvenor moved that "an *extended* and *united* administration was necessary for the extrication of the country from its distracted state," great difference of opinion respecting its eligibility, was exhibited among the members of the assembly. Powis, whose sentiments upon every point inspired great respect, declared that "a general coalition was now become a matter, not of choice, but of necessity." "No man," added he, "can any longer oppose it, without

voting in effect that the national business shall be suspended, which must produce general ruin." Widely different was the view of things taken by Sir Cecil Wray, who, however inferior to Powis in ability, yet, as being Fox's colleague for Westminster, and possessing plain common sense, was heard with much attention. "I cannot," said he, "consistently with my duty or my principles, contribute by my vote to replace in cabinet, the very individuals, who by their late daring invasion of the rights and properties of their fellow subjects, have been so justly dismissed by his majesty, and some of whom ought to have been brought to the block." "As to the distractions in the state, which are mentioned in the *motion*, I know of none; nor do I believe in their existence, On the contrary, the people seem to be nearly of one opinion, respecting the present ministers and those recently in power. The former are generally regarded as honest and virtuous; while the others are thought to have justly forfeited their employments, for having attacked the most sacred privileges of their fellow citizens. There are hardly two opinions on this subject, without doors. This house, indeed, has declared that it has no confidence in the administration; but the addresses which are daily pouring in from different parts of the kingdom, prove how much the public confide in them. The unavoidable inference is, that *the voice of the House of Commons, is no longer the voice of the people of England.*"

Fox, in his reply, treated the addresses to which Sir Cecil had alluded, with great contumely; not foreseeing how rapidly they would spread over the whole surface of the country. Of Westminster, and of Middlesex, he spoke as portions of England inaccessible to ministerial artifice or delusion. The chancellor of the exchequer having assented to Mr. Grosvenor's *motion*, Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, immediately proposed, that the continuance of the present ministers in power is an *obstacle* to an *extended* and *united* administration;" Fox thus conducting his majority forward from step to step, till he should carry them to the intended consummation. On this mode of parlia-

mentary proceeding, Pitt commented with much severity and justice of animadversion. "The house," observed he, "has been insidiously led on from one resolution to another, without ever discussing any single proposition on its own proper merits. The first resolutions were voted at six in the morning, — a most unusual hour, — with scarcely any debate or discussion. The second grew out of the former, and were followed by the third. But how had they been discussed? As mere corollaries to the preceding propositions, which this assembly was bound in consistency to adopt, as a matter of course. Thus artfully have we been kept from forming a fair estimate of the questions submitted to us."—Having endeavoured to point out the contradictions in which Powis involved himself, by *voting* for the resolutions, though he *opposed* and *disapproved* them; though he admitted that "they were hastily proposed, grounded on doubtful or unauthenticated premises, and held out unfair conclusions;" Pitt adverted to other parts of that gentleman's speech. "He does not wish me," added the minister, "to quit the fortress, as he denominates it, that I occupy, and to march out with a halter about my neck. Sir, the only fortress that I recognise, or ever wish to defend, is the fortress of the Constitution. For its preservation I will resist every attack, and every seduction. With what regard, indeed, either to my own personal honour, or to public principle, can I change my armour, and meanly beg to be received as a volunteer among the forces of the enemy? This is a humiliation to which I never will condescend."—"I am, nevertheless, disposed to facilitate, as far as my principles will allow me, the union so much desired. But I see no reason for the previous resignation of ministers, and never will consent to it. If the house think otherwise, there are constitutional means open to them, either by impeachment for our crimes, if we have committed any, or by addressing the crown for our removal." Mr. Coke's motion passed by a majority of nineteen, in a very crowded house, where four hundred and twenty-seven members were present.

Notwithstanding this apparent triumph

of the *coalition*, their cause declined in the public estimation from day to day. Neither the powerful eloquence of Fox, the sallies of wit which illuminated every speech of Lord North, nor the happy mixture of humour, argument, and satire which characterised the efforts of Sheridan in parliament, could rescue the party from the imputation of having made mutual sacrifices of principle. During the debate of the subsequent evening, the third of February, Sheridan even avowed, without circumlocution, that when Fox first communicated to him the proposition of coalescing with his ancient adversary, he advised his right honorable friend by no means to accede to it; as the insurmountable prejudices imbibed throughout the nation would infallibly produce the loss of his popularity, character, and general estimation. Sheridan added, indeed, that on maturely weighing the motives of state necessity by which it was dictated, when sustained by his experience of the honour, principles, and steadiness of Lord North, he rejoiced at the union which had taken place, even in contradiction to his own advice. But it is evident from this disclosure of his sentiments, that he reasoned more dispassionately than Fox; who, seduced by his ambition, goaded by his wants, and beholding only the numerical ascendant which Lord North's junction would give him, in one, if not in both Houses of Parliament, imagined that he could coerce the sovereign, and might either persuade, delude, or despise the people. The event fully justified Sheridan's opinion, and manifested the superiority of his judgment; since, even though we should admit that Lord Shelburne would inevitably have remained in power if Fox had not joined Lord North, yet the former must have occupied the most imposing situation as a public man, placed in some measure at the head of the Rockingham party, while maintaining his original ground of opposition; and could not probably have been long excluded from a participation in the counsels of the crown, even by Pitt himself.

In vain did Sheridan, with admirable wit, endeavour to show that an equal sacrifice of all political principle, had taken place on the ministerial side of the

house as was exhibited among the members opposite them:—an assertion which he attempted to illustrate by the spectacle which the treasury bench presented, where the individuals now seated side by side, were beheld recently acting in hostility towards each other. But the union of inferior or subordinate persons, did not excite sentiments of equal repugnance, nor awaken such moral condemnation, as the *coalition* of two principals, the one of whom had, for successive years, been loaded by the other, with the severest imputations, and denounced as a just object of national vengeance. In vain did Fox accuse the first minister, after assassinating the Constitution by secret influence, in one House of Parliament; with having recourse to methods of the basest corruption, in order to procure a majority in another." As vainly did Rigby reproach Pitt with lavishing peerages for the same purpose; while it was notorious that the late administration was debarred from conferring similar dignities, and had not been able to make even a single British peer. With as little effect did Marsham read the resolutions adopted by the meeting at the St. Alban's tavern, affirming "that any administration founded on the total exclusion of the members of the last, or of the present ministry, would be inadequate to the public exigencies;" or did Powis urge the chancellor of the exchequer to resign, as a necessary preliminary to all conciliation. Pitt, though he still professed to desire an union, "provided it could be effected without a sacrifice of principle or of honour; yet not only refused previously to retire from office, but started many ulterior impediments to the accomplishment of the object itself.

No symptoms of approximation between the contending parties, beyond unmeaning professions of mutual disposition to bury in oblivion past animosities, took place: while among their respective adherents, a spirit of inveterate enmity was exhibited. Lord Mulgrave, in one of his speeches, charged Fox with "trampling the House of Brunswick under foot," by his "East India Bill;" and though called to order by the late secretary of state, inveighed against him as "a plunderer and an invader."

Governor Johnstone said, that "if an election for a king were to take place in this country, Mr. Fox should have his vote; so high an opinion did he entertain of those transcendent abilities which the right honorable gentleman possessed: but wishing to preserve the Constitution, he had negatived a bill which would have placed its author above all control." "His talents," added Johnstone, "I admit to be pre-eminent: so were those of Julius Cæsar, who undid Rome. Oliver Cromwell, who made the House of Commons his instrument, overturned the Constitution. Such would have been the effect of the East India Bill, if it had passed the legislature. Nor is the continuance of the present minister in office, less necessary in order to prevent the renewal of that measure, than was his original acceptance of employment, to defeat it in the first instance." Wilberforce declared, that "even if that obnoxious bill had passed the House of Peers, by as great a majority as it did the lower house yet he should equally have thanked the crown for dismissing the late ministers." Pitt himself, treating with defiance, as well as with contempt, Fox's indirect attempts to force his resignation, called on his antagonist to come boldly forward; and either to criminate his conduct as a minister, or to move a personal question for his removal from office. Professing his own purity, both as a man, and as a public functionary, he avowed his indifference for all the clamour of party, or the unfounded imputations brought against the mode of his attaining power; and concluded by trusting that the house would do justice to the motives, which actuated his present line of conduct.

[11th—17th February.] Burke by no means took the same active or conspicuous part in the debates that followed the rejection of the "East India Bill," as he had exhibited while the measure was on its progress to the upper house. With the loss of the pay office, he seemed to have lost for a time, much of his energy of mind. Even Lord North scarcely occupied the second place in these parliamentary convulsions, where Sheridan and Erskine, Powis, and even Marsham, severally attracted almost as much attention, as the

late first minister. His blue ribband, seen conspicuous among the great coats, buff waistcoats, and dirty boots of his new allies, involuntarily recalled the reflection of his having given the law from the treasury bench, during twelve years, to the same assembly, in which he now performed so humiliating and inferior a character. He bore, nevertheless, this political change, under which many men would have sunk, with that imperturbable serenity and equality of temper, which ever distinguished him through life. He acquired even the applauses of every party, by the manly promptitude, and cheerful readiness, which he showed to sacrifice all personal objects or interests to the public tranquillity. When Pitt avowed, that however highly he might respect that nobleman's abilities, or esteem his private character, yet they could never sit together in the same cabinet; Lord North, while he loudly censured the contemptuous dignity, and unaccommodating spirit of the chancellor of the exchequer; nevertheless declared, that no considerations relative to himself, should for an instant impede the formation of a new ministry, consonant to the general wishes of the country.

"There may be individuals," observed Pitt, "against whom I entertain no personal dislike or ill-will; whose private character I even respect and revere: whose abilities are great; and yet with whom I could never bring myself to sit, or to act in the cabinet." No reply could be more dignified, yet disinterested, than that of Lord North. "It is impossible for me to avoid perceiving," said he, "that I am the person to whom allusion is made. From whatever quarter, however, such expressions may come, and with whatever form of words, they may be clothed, I never will quit my situation, or be driven from the ground which I occupy in this country, to gratify the caprice or the prejudices of any man, whatever may be his position in the state, or his opinion of himself. But if in the present distracted condition of the country, produced by the means which the chancellor of the exchequer has used for obtaining power, I find that the national voice demands my retirement; or that public opinion

regards me as an obstacle to that extended and united administration, so anxiously required, God forbid that I should impede the consummation of such a salutary union! No love of power or emolument, no object of ambition, shall induce me for a single day to form a bar to the completion of that great object." This declaration elicited the warmest expressions of admiration from Marsham and Powis: — Eulogiums the more noticed, as no individuals in the house had treated him with greater acrimony, when first lord of the treasury, during the latter part of the American war. Powis, after panegyrising Lord North's virtues, subjoined, "For my own part, I am not among the number of those persons who would wish to exclude the noble lord from any place in a future administration; but since he has so disinterestedly expressed his readiness to sacrifice his own prospects, to the general tranquillity and benefit, the fault will henceforward lie with the minister, if he should still refuse to pay to the House of Commons, the deference due to a branch of the legislature."

Lord North was nevertheless unable to prevent the borough of Banbury, for which place he sat in Parliament, and where his family had always possessed a decisive influence; from joining in the general cry against the *coalition*, and even framing an address, thanking his majesty for the recent dismission from office, of their actual representative in the House of Commons. A delegation from the inhabitants of Banbury, waited on me in London, bringing with them the address itself; accompanied by a request that I would present it to the king on the first levee day, at St. James's. But on full consideration, I declined taking such a personal part against a nobleman whom I greatly respected, loved, and honoured, though I had withdrawn from the party with which he had connected himself. Lord North alluding afterwards, during the debate which took place on the 27th of February, to this address, declared that "he had the consolation to know, it was not signed by one of those individuals, his constituents, who returned him to Parliament." It spoke, nevertheless, the sentiments of a large and respectable

portion of the inhabitants and householders of the place.

[18th and 19th February.] No circumstance could more forcibly demonstrate the little apprehension felt by Pitt, of the effects of parliamentary indignation; or could prove in a stronger manner, the confidence with which his own popularity inspired him, than his conduct at this juncture. Almost immediately after the extinction of the fallacious expectations awakened by the St. Alban's tavern meeting, the chancellor of the exchequer, rising in his place, calmly acquainted the house, that "the king, notwithstanding their resolutions, had not thought proper to dismiss his ministers; and that they had not resigned." Such a piece of information, so delivered, seemed meant to force the *coalition* on some measure of violence. Fox, nevertheless, while he did not affect to conceal his indignation at the affront offered to the legislative body, and at the defiance conveyed in the minister's words; yet knew too well the feeble state of the machine over which he presided, to press heavily upon its springs. He reprobated, indeed, the treatment which the house experienced; — a treatment demanding, he said, exemplary punishment. But he concluded with only proposing an adjournment of eight and forty hours, in order to give the minister time for reflection. This motion, so distinguished by involuntary forbearance, he carried by *twelve*; a very slender superiority, where above four hundred members divided.

Fox, on this occasion, though he pretended to deprecate any intemperate step, and only demanded a respite of one or two days; exclaiming with Dido, while he accommodated her complaints to his own feelings,

"Tempus inane peto; spatium requiemque
furori;"

yet endeavoured, by a most able and laboured appeal to the wounded pride of the house, to inflame their passions, while he directed their resentment against the minister. Powis highly approved and supported the motion, which, he said, was in itself moderate, forbearing, and the only proper course adapted to

the extraordinary circumstances of the country, as it allowed breathing time, while a compromise, he hoped, might yet be effectuated. But, there were other independent members of the house, who held a different language. Sir William Lemon, one of the representatives for the county of Cornwall, declared that he wished not for any union, on the principles laid down by Fox. "I never liked," said he, "any of the *resolutions* adopted by this assembly, of which the present ministers are the object. I consider them as arbitrary, violent, and personal. The chancellor of the exchequer has already made every concession compatible with his private honour, and his official situation. Those two great component parts of his present existence, must stand or fall together. I am happy that he has displayed so much firmness in so good a cause, and I trust he will not stoop to any unbecoming negotiation."

Thus sustained from without, as well as from within, Pitt not only displayed the most determined resolution, but charged Fox and his adherents with systematically withholding the supplies; thus sacrificing their country, as he asserted, to private faction, enmity, or ambition. A distinction was however drawn by the opposition, between *withholding* the supplies, and only *postponing* them; which latter line of conduct, Powis, in moderate language, and Marsham, with much stronger asseveration, declared to constitute their sole intention. The last mentioned member recriminated with asperity on the chancellor of the exchequer, as expecting from him the same servile submission in registering the ministerial edicts, which the French sovereigns exacted in the assemblies denominated parliaments. With more ability, Fox attempted to make a compromise with the minister; offering instantly to vote the supplies, provided that the house might receive assurances from him, that "his majesty would comply with the desires of his faithful commons." But, Pitt, after first declaring the conviction of "his personal honour being inseparably connected with his present official situation, and his determination never to resign as a prelude to negotiation;" — in other words, to leave his place, and then to treat with the opposition, in order

to form part of a new administration;" — peremptorily refused to barter office for supply, or to enter into any stipulation on the subject. From this resolution, expressed in laconic, but energetic terms, neither menaces, blandishments, nor expostulations, could induce him to recede: and after a prolonged debate of two successive days, Fox, as the master of the assembly, finally moved to adjourn the sitting on the state of the nation, which was carried without a division. He still remained all-powerful within those walls; but Pitt's superiority lay without doors, in every county, town, and village.

Already addresses crowded in from London, down to New Sarum; a borough which, though consisting only of one solitary farm house, yet as belonging to Lord Camelford, who had just been elevated to the peerage, did not omit to offer its tribute of loyalty to the crown, and of abhorrence for the measures of the opposition. Middlesex, Southwark, even Westminster, abandoning Fox, approached the throne with congratulations, or with testimonies of approbation at the dismissal of the late ministers. York, a city where the Cavendish interest had always been predominant, and which place the late chancellor of the exchequer actually represented in Parliament; — Edinburgh, Worcester, Exeter, and many other inferior towns, followed the example, which spread with rapidity throughout the whole island. When we reflect on these facts, we shall probably think that Mr. Pitt, whatever professions he might either make himself; or whatever wishes for "an united and extended administration," he might judge proper to put into his royal master's mouth, in reply to the addresses of the House of Commons; yet could have nourished no serious intentions of dividing his power with Fox.

Among the persons of rank who acted a conspicuous part, and manifested more than ordinary enthusiasm in the cause of Pitt, at this time, were two well known noblemen, lord Mahon, and Lord Mountmorres. I have already made mention of the former, whose eccentricities of dress, character, and deportment, however great they might be, were nevertheless allied to extraordinary powers of

elocution, as well as energies of mind. My acquaintance with him was slight; but, during many years I lived in habits of familiar and frequent intercourse with Lord Mountmorres. In his person he was tall, slender, of a dark and adust complexion; active, and always on his feet, to so great a degree as to convey an idea of ubiquity personified; — for, he seemed to be in many places at the same time. Invariably busy, yet never attaining his object; unsuccessful in love, in ambition, in every pursuit; yet still continuing the chase. An orator in print, but destitute of eloquence; and printing speeches which he had never pronounced. Fluent and plausible in conversation, though wanting judgment. Abandoning his hereditary seat in the Irish House of Peers, where he might have been useful to his country, he preferred London; borne up by the fallacious hope of acquiring a place in the English House of Commons, which he never accomplished. An enthusiast in politics, he was not the less an economist in his expenses; and though ardent in his views, always keeping his purse close shut. Perpetually planning marriages, but never succeeding in them, he finally died without entering into that state. Such was Lord Mountmorres, to whom the authors of the “*Rolliad*” have assigned *two* “*Probationary Odes* ;” while to all the other individuals selected for ridicule, among whom I hold my place, they have only attributed one production of that kind. On the hustings, whether erected in Covent Garden, in Palace Yard, or in Westminster Hall, both the above mentioned noblemen were constantly found, as in their proper element; and Fox had not in the whole range of the metropolis, two more determined enemies. Lord Mahon was however in all senses the most formidable, pertinacious, and respectable.

As the tide of popular indignation rose against the “*East India Bill*,” tumultuary meetings took place in many parts of the kingdom, where the general sense of the inhabitants was collected. Westminster itself, which during the last years of Lord North’s unfortunate administration, had constituted the citadel and the sanctuary of Fox; renouncing its voluntary allegiance, raised the stand-

ard against him. He vainly maintained, both by himself, and through his adherents in Parliament, particularly Erskine, that this painful change originated solely in delusion or imposture: as if it required a superior intelligence, to appreciate the objects of that measure; or as if Pitt, like the Magician in the “*Arabian Nights’ Entertainments*,” could transform beef and mutton, into the appearance of human flesh. Lord North, alluding to one of these assemblages of people in Westminster Hall, which had very recently taken place, and at which Fox was necessarily present; I think, it happened in the course of the debate of the 18th of February; gave a most picturesque and ludicrous description of the scene, as well as of the principal performers. “*Much*,” observed that facetious nobleman, “*has been advanced relative to the pretended popularity of the present minister. From what source does he derive such nostrums? Is it from the meeting, held a few days ago, in Westminster Hall? One description of citizens there vociferated, No coalition! while others exclaimed, No back stairs influence! But it demanded the utmost precision of ear, to decide which of the two clamours predominated. Indeed, the noise owed its origin, as I am assured, not so much to the multitude, as to two noble lords who were there present. The first (Lord Mahon), by his nervous, impassioned gesticulation, and sonorous oratory, is well calculated to carry away the prize in such a contest. The disinterested eloquence of the other peer (Lord Mountmorres), claims peculiar respect. Not influenced by British property, he has magnanimously exposed his person in a voyage to this island, and has hazarded the perils of the sea. Professing himself a citizen of the world, an advocate for the universal rights of mankind, he has abandoned his native country. He has even left its freedom in jeopardy, in order that he may devote his whole faculties to the interests and preservation of this nation. From the operation and influence of such exalted characters on the public mind, we cannot reason with safety.*”

Masterly as this piece of historic oratory must be esteemed, and powerful as was its operation on the muscles of the

audience, when pronounced; Lord Mahon, two days afterwards, during the discussion of the 20th February, retaliated with great severity, not unaccompanied with ability, on his political adversaries. After enumerating the unequivocal proofs of unpopularity which Fox received at the meeting alluded to by Lord North, "Does he," exclaimed Lord Mahon, "interpret groans into applause, and take hisses for approbation? There was a time, when he was heard like an oracle! Why? Because the public credulously believed that he was fighting their battles, as a sincere and honest tribune of the people. But their eyes are opened since he has attempted to raise himself above the free Constitution of his country, by aspiring to the place of a dictator."—"How was their zeal expressed? In pretty intelligible words. *No grand Mogul! No India tyrant! No usurper! No turncoat! No Catiline!* If such be the popularity to which he aspires, and if such are the marks of approbation of which he boasts, long may he continue to receive them!" Even Pitt, in the course of the same evening, had recourse to similar illustrations of the decline of Fox's influence over his constituents, who once idolized him. Having stated the defeat of the *coalition* at *Reading*, he next adverted to their discomfiture at *Hackney*, where the freeholders of Middlesex had been convened. Fixing his eyes on George Byng, one of the members for that county, "I see over against me," observed he, "a most determined chieftain, just returned from that field of warfare; whose brow, indeed, is no longer, as formerly, adorned with the smiles of victory. Whether at *Westminster* it is a proof of triumph, that the people would not even hear the right honorable gentleman (Fox), who once could charm the multitude into mute attention;—whether *he*, emphatically denominated *the man, and the champion of the people*, is now content with the execration of those multitudes, whom he so long held in voluntary bonds of attachment and homage;—these are points on which I will not decide: but sure I am, that if Westminster constitutes his only proof, the voice of the people is no longer with him." Fox,

though little accustomed to allow such speeches to remain unnoticed, did not offer any reply either to Pitt, or to Lord Mahon. We may, however, form some idea, from the scenes portrayed within the walls of the House of Commons, how great was the ferment which then pervaded the metropolis and the kingdom.

[February 4th—16th.] The House of Peers, which assembly, after arresting the progress of the "East India Bill," as if exhausted by that effort, had ever since remained silent and supine spectators of the contest carrying on between the crown and the Commons; exhibited some symptoms of animation about this time, by adopting, early in the month of February, two propositions of a nature tending to condemn the conduct of the lower house, and to strengthen the hands of the sovereign. The Earl of Effingham, who during many years of his life, had manifested the most decided hostility to the king's government; and who, as late as June, 1780, was unjustly accused of personally mixing in the riots of the capital; now appeared as the zealous defender of prerogative. He was sustained by the Duke of Richmond, whose political character and opinions had undergone since 1782, a similar transformation: while on the other hand, the resolutions moved by Lord Effingham, found the warmest opponents in the Earl of Mansfield, in Lord Stormont, and Lord Loughborough, so long the systematic champions of royalty.

Few debates more animated, as well as acrimonious and personal, have ever taken place within the walls of the upper house, than occurred on this occasion. While Lord Fitzwilliam drew the most unfavourable portrait of the young first lord of the treasury, whom he described as deficient not only in experience, and averse to every social source of information, but as devoured by an overweening and insatiable thirst of power; the Duke of Richmond panegyrised his industry, his abstraction from dissipation, his application to public business, his frugality of the national treasure, and elevation of mind; the last of which qualities had been so conspicuously displayed in his recent renun-

ciation of a lucrative sinecure place. Lord Stormont endeavoured to point the general indignation against him, for his presumption in continuing to retain his situation, in defiance of the votes and resolutions of the House of Commons: while his predecessors in office, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord North, and the Earl of Shelburne, had, each in turn, anticipated, or respectfully obeyed the first demonstrations of the pleasure of that branch of the legislature. The Earl of Mansfield, with the political timidity so characteristic of his whole life, in every situation, judicial or parliamentary; deprecated, as the greatest of national calamities, any resolution, which by interrupting the harmony subsisting between the two houses, might lead to a dissolution. He seemed to contemplate such an event, if it should take place, as commensurate with the destruction of the British Constitution itself; as disbanding the army, laying up the navy, suspending the functions of government, and throwing the country into irreparable confusion. The house, neither deterred nor intimidated by these denunciations, voted the resolutions by a large majority of forty-seven; and followed them immediately with an address to the throne, expressive of their reliance on his majesty's wisdom in the selection of his confidential servants, as well as by the assurances of their support, in the just exercise of those prerogatives entrusted to him for the protection of his people. It was difficult to imagine a triumph more decisive over the *coalition*, or a more opportune and important accession of strength to the first minister, struggling against a majority in the House of Commons. The king received, and replied to the address, in laconic, but warm and affectionate language.

In other periods of our history, such an interference, followed by such a censure, might, and unquestionably would, have called out the resentment of the representatives of the people. But as Fox justly dreaded all occasions of rupture, or of dispute between the two houses, which might afford the new ministers a plausible pretence for the dissolution of parliament; he contented himself with dictating and carrying six counter reso-

lutions, tending to justify the line of conduct that had been adopted by the House of Commons. Lord Beauchamp was selected for the performance of this service; and after a series of debates which occupied eleven days, distinguished throughout by the same asperity as had been exhibited in every preceding discussion, the resolutions finally passed without a division. In the progress of these gladiatorial exhibitions of parliamentary ability and dexterity — for such they could only be deemed — Fox, conscious that the conflict in which he had engaged wore from day to day a more sinister appearance, and must, however it might be protracted, terminate in his fall; assumed every shape, and tried every means of inducing his adversary to propose, or to accept, some principles of accommodation. At one time, denouncing the first lord of the treasury, Fox held him up to national execration, as a conspirator, who aimed at the life of the House of Commons; which assembly he at the same time daily insulted, by appearing among them as a confidential servant of the crown, though destitute of their confidence or support. Changing altogether his tone, a few days afterwards, in soothing accents, calculated to win their way into the heart, he complimented Pitt's abilities; professed respect for his political principles; expressed his readiness, nay, his eagerness, to form an union, provided it was grounded, not on private interest or aggrandizement, but on great public meritorious motives of action; apologised for any harsh or unguarded expressions which might have occurred in the warmth of debate; avowed his ambition and love of glory, as sentiments which he felt in common with the first lord of the treasury; and finished by protesting that he would make every personal sacrifice at the shrine of his country.

In farther corroboration of these conciliating dispositions, Fox took occasion to declare, that he was ready to accommodate and modify his obnoxious bill for the government of India, so as to meet the public wish, and to acquire the public confidence. He would abandon the patronage which it conferred, and would submit every clause or regulation of the

measure itself, to the discussion of Parliament. His noble friend, Lord North, would prove no obstacle to union between the two parties. There remained only one stipulation, from which he could never recede; namely, Mr. Pitt's virtual resignation; as being indispensable in itself, and as an expiation to the violated Constitution of Great Britain. In reply to these alternate menaces and blandishments, the minister, on his part, affected and professed an equal desire of union, on bases of principle and honour; disclaimed all personal views in the line of conduct which he had adopted, by his acceptance of office; declared that he should ever think he had performed an essential service to his country, by defeating a measure big with destruction to the Constitution; expressed his consolation at finding that Fox was disposed to renounce any of its pernicious features; protested that he and his colleagues were all ready to resign their employments, as soon as a prospect presented itself of forming an administration, by which the state might be effectually served; but took care to conclude by declaring, that he could neither reconcile it to the duty which he owed his sovereign and the people of England, nor to his own honour, to lay down his office, before he beheld such a prospect. It was evident that, amidst these reciprocal professions and demonstrations, not the smallest advance was made on either side, towards real approximation.

[20th February.] However decidedly the sentiments of the capital and of the nation, had been already pronounced in favour of the new ministers, yet Fox still retained firm possession of the House of Commons; though he held that assembly, as he well knew, only by a frail and decaying tenure. Powis, who, notwithstanding his avowed disapprobation of the *East India Bill*, and his invincible repugnance to the *coalition*, did not the less condemn and oppose the formation of the new administration, as wholly subversive of the dignity and inherent rights of the lower House of Parliament; rising in his place, originated another effort for compelling the king to dismiss the first lord of the treasury. A most animated, long, and acrimonious debate ensued, terminating

in favour of opposition, at a very late hour of the morning, after two divisions, both which Fox carried; the first, by a majority of *twenty*; the last, by *twenty-one*. The address voted, was ordered to be presented by the whole house. But this triumph, however apparently gratifying, might be considered rather as nominal, than real; not extending in fact beyond the threshold of the lobby, and being neither calculated to intimidate the sovereign, nor to accelerate the first minister's resignation.

Lord Nugent, who might with even more propriety than Welbore Ellis, be denominated the *Nestor* of the House of Commons, at the period of which I am writing; and who manifested all the garrulity of old age, sustained by a sort of unblushing facility of utterance, which might pass for eloquence; — took a prominent, and an extraordinary part in the discussion. Though closely connected with Earl Temple, to whom he had married his daughter, the heiress of his fortune; yet he professed ardently to wish a reconciliation and a union between the two rival statesmen. As an encouragement to attempt so great a national object, he stated that he had accomplished, more than thirty years before, a similar undertaking, by means of a personal interview between Lord Granville and Mr. Pelham, which took place at his own residence. "These two candidates for power," said Lord Nugent, "came to the appointment, disguised. I introduced them to each other, and then left them alone. A good supper, and excellent wine, which I had provided, soon banished mutual reserve. They spoke freely, became friends, and so remained. Thus was this *coalition* effected in a single night. I am not much acquainted with the two gentlemen now sitting opposite each other; but, if they will meet at my house, they shall have a delicate supper, with the finest wines. *They may even, if they please, get gloriously drunk.* And I will answer for it, over the bottle, their punctilios and distrust will vanish: while confidence will spring up, where diffidence previously existed." This proposition, which seemed rather adapted to a private convivial party, than becoming a legislative assembly, excited

no remark from any quarter; and was excused on account of the age, sustained by the bold peculiarities of the noble person with whom it originated. Pitt and Fox could not have been reconciled, or made to act together, like Mr. Pelham and Lord Granville. The men, and the times, were, both, equally different.

I have never witnessed greater oratorical exertions made by Fox, than on that evening. In a speech of prodigious length, which might be said to try the patience of the house, he endeavoured to concentrate every argument, and to exhaust every topic of declamation. But his antagonist, elevated by the victories obtained without doors, in various towns and counties; as well as nearer home, at Hackney, where the freeholders of Middlesex had been convened; and above all, in Westminster itself, where Fox had just received the most unequivocal marks of the disapprobation, or rather indignation, of his own constituents; — elated by his consciousness of these advantages, Pitt, with far more brevity, but in a higher tone than he had ever yet assumed, retorted on his adversary with inconceivable severity. After exposing to derision the inconsistency of his present conduct in becoming the champion of a small majority of the House of Commons, instead of constituting the distinguished organ of the popular voice, as he once was; and complimenting him on the dexterity, with which he supported in turn the most opposite political characters; Pitt justified himself from the charge of imposture in representing to the nation the pernicious consequences to the British Constitution, that must have resulted from “the East India Bill.” His expressions, — I mean Pitt’s, — were dipt in gall, though arrayed in all the elegance of language. “The right honorable gentlemen,” observed the minister, “has this evening appeared in a character entirely new; but which he supports, as, indeed, he does all his parts — with wonderful ability. He is to-night the champion of a small majority of this house against the loud and decided voice of the people. He has even endeavoured in this, his new character, to calumniate the English people. *Imposture* was the term used by his learned

friend (Erskine); — for how should the people understand the *India Bill*? Do they know all the abuses practised on the Ganges? — Sir, they know that the loss, nay, the annihilation of India, could not compensate for the subversion of the Constitution. They could see that the *Bill* raised up a new power, stripping the crown of its prerogative, and the people of their chartered rights, in order to render its author a dictator over both his sovereign and his country.”

Then descending to personal objects, “the right honorable gentleman,” said he, “calls me a mere nominal minister, the puppet of secret influence. It is because I disdain to become *his* puppet, by resigning my office, that he thus denominates me. But his contemptuous expressions shall never provoke me to resignation. My own honour and reputation I never will resign, to place myself under his protection; to accept a nomination from him, and thereby become a poor, powerless, self-condemned, unprofitable minister in his train: — a minister, serviceable to him perhaps, but altogether incapable of serving my king, or my country. If, indeed, I have, as he asserts, submitted to become the puppet and the minion of the crown, why will he condescend to admit me among his band?” — “Severe, therefore, as the conflict is, my conscience, my duty, my attachment to the Constitution, maintains me in my present arduous situation. It arises not from contempt or defiance of the constitutional resolutions of this assembly. Neither a point of honour nor the love of power impel me to cling to office. The nature of the time, and I will add, the voice of the country, call on me to defend this fortress, and nothing shall induce me to surrender it.” He concluded by levelling the severest reproaches on Fox, for stopping, or as the opposition termed it, suspending and postponing the supplies; thus sacrificing the public interests, to private animosity or ambition. No reply was made to this eloquent harangue, which seemed finally to extinguish all the fallacious hopes, so long nourished by sanguine or credulous individuals, of beholding an administration founded on a broad basis. It became evident that no intentions of such

a nature, were seriously cherished or encouraged; and it was equally palpable, that one of the two contending parties must ultimately sink under the superiority of his opponent.

[21st — 27th February.] Already Fox's majority, undermined by many causes, began to exhibit symptoms of rapid decay. While some members abandoned the *coalition*, in deference to the public voice, or in obedience to the remonstrances of their immediate constituents; others yielded to suggestions of a personal or interested nature, and withdrew from a sinking party, whose approaching extinction they anticipated. These latter individuals drew on themselves the bitterest sarcasms for their desertion, not only from Fox, but at different times, from various members of the opposition. The king's answer to the last address, drawn up with consummate skill, gracious in its language, conciliating in its professions, declaring how anxiously his majesty desired to form "a firm, efficient, extended, and united administration;" but lamenting the inefficiency of his efforts for that purpose; denying that it would be advanced or facilitated by the previous dismissal of his ministers, against whom no charge or complaint was preferred; observing that numbers of his subjects had expressed their satisfaction at the late change in his councils; and finally declining to vacate the essential offices of executive government, till he should see a prospect of effecting such a union as his faithful Commons recommended: — this reply augmented the embarrassments, while it added to the dismay, of the *coalition* leaders.

On the question being agitated, of adjourning its consideration for two or three days; after a short debate, Fox found himself indeed still in a majority, but it consisted only of *seven*, though near three hundred and fifty members voted. He made, nevertheless, on the first day of the ensuing month, when the royal answer was read by the Speaker, another desperate attempt to carry the ministerial trenches by storm, and sustained it by his accustomed display of eloquence. The debates themselves had however ceased to excite the same interest, or to awaken the same attention, as they had

produced in earlier stages of the contest. Yet in a very full house, falling little short of four hundred, the opposition maintained their superiority, and even rose to *twelve*. Another address was voted; but, though it still besought the sovereign "to lay the foundation of a strong and stable government, by the previous removal of his present ministers;" it lamented "the failure of his endeavours for forming an united administration; and their concern, as well as disappointment, at his majesty's not having been advised to take any further steps for effecting the object." It was impossible more clearly to admit their inability to dictate to the crown, and their desire, of dividing with Pitt the power, of which it had become evidently impracticable wholly to deprive him.

The whole drift and object of Fox's speech were designed to prove, by reference to the events of the two preceding reigns, that both George the First and Second had invariably complied with the expressed wishes of the House of Commons, in the choice or dismissal of their ministers. No principle of the Constitution could indeed be more clearly recognized, or more indisputable. Pitt himself admitted it. But, its practical application in the present instance, violated common sense, because neither cause nor reason was assigned for compelling the king to dismiss his confidential servants. "No man," observed the chancellor of the exchequer, in his reply to Fox, can more strongly maintain than myself, the right of this house to advise the sovereign, in the exercise of all his prerogatives. But that a declaration of this house, disapproving his majesty's ministers, should, *ipso facto*, compel him to dismiss them, or oblige them to resign, I never will allow." — "Does the history of this country afford any instance of an administration called on to retire from office, without a cause?" — Fox's majority constituted the only refutation of such reasoning.

[4th and 5th March.] In his answer to their address, the king nearly repeated his preceding declaration; only subjoining, that he did not consider the failure of his recent endeavours to form an extended and united administration, as constituting a final bar to its accom-

plishment, if it could have been obtained on principles of fairness and equality." But as though he had been desirous at the same time, of extinguishing any such expectations, he added, "I know of no farther steps that I can take, that are likely to remove the difficulties which obstruct that desirable end." Fox, who beheld as in a mirror, the sentence of his perpetual exclusion from office, conveyed under these expressions of the sovereign; after first postponing the consideration of his majesty's reply, for four days, endeavoured to throw an insurmountable barrier in the way of dissolution, by delaying the progress of the mutiny bill through the house. An animated debate ensued on the subject; in which, while the two leaders took only a comparatively inferior share, Lord North spoke at considerable length, and with great ability. Under the possible anticipation that the majority might be able to prevent the mutiny bill from passing, opinions had been hazarded from persons seated on the ministerial benches, that even though that annual act should be suffered to expire, yet the king might keep the army together; both the men, and the money for their payment being already voted. When therefore the consent of the House of Peers should be obtained, the crown, it was asserted, might have an army on foot, with the recognized approbation of Parliament. Sir Adam Ferguson, member for the county of Ayr in Scotland, a man of sound sense, himself bred to the Scotch bar, where he had attained to eminence, supported the proposition.

This doctrine, which, it must be confessed, was not to be found in "the Bill of Rights;" and which might, in its effects, have proved subversive of the British Constitution; received, it is true, no direct sanction from Pitt: but it did not the less provoke and produce from various quarters, the severest animadversion. Lord North observed, that "such a discovery, if founded in law, might well make every man tremble for his liberty. Those who maintained it, must however, likewise assert, that the army might be kept together without discipline, and without punishment; the first being only enforced, and the latter only inflicted, under the mutiny act." He con-

cluded by reminding ministers, "that notwithstanding the money had been voted for the payment of the army; yet until the act specifically *appropriating* it to that branch of service, had passed; no power or right existed in administration, to issue any sum, however small, for the purpose." Finally, he warned them, that "as a prorogation or dissolution does away every vote of supply, not previously carried into an act of Parliament; if, therefore, the minister should have recourse to such a measure, the votes of army, navy, ordnance, and supply of every kind, must instantly be destroyed and fall to the ground." No answer was made or attempted from the treasury bench, to these denunciations, which did not indeed admit of any constitutional reply; and only served to show the critical, as well as awful position of the country, left without an efficient government, and apparently on the verge of a suspension or extinction of all its establishments.

Powis and Marsham, who commonly acted in concert, uniting their efforts on this occasion, attacked the minister in language of equal energy and acrimony. The former, after expressing his amazement at the king's answer, and wishing for time to shed a tear over the expiring dignity, and to regulate the funeral procession of the House of Commons; lamented that administration appeared to be determined on prosecuting their mad career, and on elevating prerogative above privilege. Marsham reiterated the same sentiments, while he protested that no act could be more remote from his intention, than to delay the public business, or to plunge the country into confusion. Rigby, who had been called on by the attorney general, only a few days before, to pay into the exchequer, the large balances of public money remaining in his hands; — a demand of which he loudly complained, as harsh and illiberal, though he could not venture directly to oppose or resist it; — came forward once more very conspicuously in the course of the debate. With that blunt, bold, dictatorial, and coarse style of oratory, which always characterized him; but of which, since the extinction of Lord North's government, he had exhibited comparatively few specimens; he

reprobated the *audacity* of a minister who presumed to remain in office, with a majority of the House of Commons against him: observing that it was reserved for the present days, to produce a chancellor of the exchequer, who said to Parliament, "I care not for your majority. The king has appointed me, and you have nothing to do with the business." He finished by declaring that his blood boiled with indignation, at the bare mention of retaining an army without a mutiny bill. Pitt did not condescend to notice these personal sarcasms or animadversions; which he well knew, however they might operate within the walls of the assembly where they were pronounced, would produce no injurious consequences to him among the people without doors. On the division for adjourning the committee upon the mutiny bill, he was again left in a minority of *nine*; the numbers being 171 against 162; Fox still retaining his slender possession of the house.

[8th March] But the termination of this great conflict, on which, not only England, but all Europe had their eyes fixed, and which had already lasted near eleven weeks, to the suspension of every kind of public business, could not be longer protracted by any efforts of eloquence, or any combinations of faction. The king in terms of gracious, yet firm determination, had twice refused to comply with the demand of a majority of the lower house; and that majority was become not less odious to the people, than it had proved itself hostile to the crown or administration. So unnatural a state of things, carried in its essence the seeds of its speedy extinction. Fox, though apparently master of the house, found himself unable to advance; and he could not remain stationary, or recede, without exposing his party to ridicule, while they were silently undermined, and diminished in numbers from day to day. His embarrassments, which did not admit of concealment, necessarily augmented the confidence of his ministerial adversaries. Nor did he attempt to disguise them, when the consideration of his majesty's answer to the last address, came before the house. In terms of querulous indignation, he stigmatized the reply, as a compound of contradiction, duplicity,

insult, and violation of the British Constitution. Having attempted to justify and defend the right of the Commons to demand the removal of ministers, without stating their reasons, or assigning any specific cause for such dismissal; he avowed that the only becoming measure now left, was to move a resolution, that "whoever should advise his majesty to continue his present administration, was an enemy to his country." But however disposed and desirous he might be to proceed to this act, he was restrained by his consciousness that he could not carry with him even a majority of the most limited description, if he made the attempt. Many of his adherents had already announced to him their determination to proceed no further, accompanied with menaces of withdrawing their support, if he tried so desperate an experiment. Thus situated, Fox stopped; and after loading ministers with the bitterest reproaches, for having, as he asserted, upset the country, involved the public credit in remediless confusion, suffered our foreign concerns to run to ruin, and incurred the guilt of leaving our East Indian possessions, a prey to every species of enormity, peculation, and tyranny; he declared that it was not his intention to stop the supplies. While he charged Pitt with inordinate ambition, as well as with having manifested a decided aversion to political union; he finished by only moving, not an address, but a *representation* to the king. It was long, expostulatory, argumentative, if not criminating; and recapitulated all the points, on which the crown and the commons had so obstinately contended: but it contained no new matter, except lamenting that "his majesty's advisers had not thought fit to suggest any farther steps, for removing the difficulties which impeded the formation of an extended administration.

The chancellor of the exchequer took little or no part in the debate which ensued on that evening. Dundas, however, supplied his place, with great acuteness, energy, and severity. Retorting on the opposition, all the accusations brought forward by them, of pursuing a mad and desperate career, to the subversion of the Constitution, whose true principles they outraged; he en-

deavoured to show that Fox's experience proved the incapacity of the House of Commons itself, however powerful a branch of the legislature it might be, to enforce its own unconstitutional resolutions. He treated the *representation* as a *manifesto*, calculated to delude the nation, by disguising the real intention of Fox; which aimed at elevating the Speaker's mace above the royal sceptre, and giving virtually to the representatives of the people, the right of naming ministers. Towards the conclusion of this able harangue, after vindicating Pitt from the imputation of opposing a union of parties, if it could have been effected on fair and honorable principles; he alluded with great force, though guardedly and hypothetically, to the well authenticated lists of peerages, offices, and emoluments, known to be promised to their adherents, by the opposition leaders, who thus condescended to avail themselves of every engine of seduction or corruption:—engines, by which, it was obvious, the country might be as completely enslaved, and the Constitution subverted, as the worst minion of the most wicked, or arbitrary monarch! Seldom have I heard Dundas, during the course of his long and brilliant parliamentary career, display more ability or eloquence, than on that evening, which may in fact be regarded as having terminated the contest between Pitt and Fox; between the crown and a majority in the House of Commons. "Why will not the right honorable gentleman," observed he, "insert in his manifesto, that *this house claims a right of putting a negative on his majesty's appointment of ministers, without assigning any reason?* — Because he knows that such a pretension might alarm the country, and then counter-declarations might appear against it." — "But let me suppose for a moment, that instead, as the Constitution directs, of the sovereign naming and protecting ministers, this assembly should assume both those privileges; in that case, a combination of men might pay as servile court to individual members of Parliament, as ever minion did to a despotic prince. If the house exercise the right of nomination and of control, any abandoned faction, commanding a majority; by artifice

within doors, and by corruption without; by promises of *peerages, places, and emoluments*, may so entrench themselves, that if they can likewise name themselves ministers, the country may be as completely subjected, and the Constitution as totally overturned, as by the most able or systematic tyrant."

This mirror, though only held up as a fiction or hypothesis, reflected most distinctly to every beholder, the image of *the coalition*. Fox made no reply to Dundas; but Burke, who, ever since the rejection of "the East India Bill," as if overcome by his second dismissal from the pay-office, had scarcely once risen in the house, or taken his accustomed share in the discussions which arose within its walls; made ample amends on that night, for his preceding silence. Though he spoke with great animation, and with equal eloquence, yet no exertions could sustain a declining, us well as unpopular party, or infuse vigour into its component members. Even the subject of controversy itself, agitated and exhausted by so many repetitions, no longer inspired the same interest; the greatest ingenuity being scarcely able to suggest any new ideas, or to strike out any fresh matter of argument. Uncommon anxiety was manifested, and impatience displayed, for the division, which took place about midnight; when Fox's majority became reduced to *one* solitary vote, the numbers on each side considerably exceeding those on the division of the 5th of March. Three hundred and eighty-five members were present, of whom 191 divided with opposition, and 190 with administration. Great exultation was expressed by the ministerial side of the house; while corresponding depression appeared on the opposite benches, at so decisive a proof of the approaching fall of the *coalition*.

[9th March.] The political spell which had so long suspended and paralysed all the functions of government, was now dissolved; and on the ensuing day, the mutiny bill, no longer opposed, passed through the committee. Fox, divested of that control which he had exercised over the assembly ever since it met in November, appeared there in person; but "shorn of his beams:"

nor can we consider the discussions which subsequently arose on various points, as other than mere conversations, since no division was ever again attempted by the opposition, down to the period of the prorogation and dissolution of Parliament. Yet scarcely any debate which took place during the interesting session under our review, opened more curious matter of speculation or of controversy, than the one that followed Fox's defeat. Powis and Marsham, who had taken so conspicuous a part throughout the whole contest, appeared for the last time on the theatre. The former, in a speech replete with pointed animadversions, and conceived with great powers of mind, endeavoured, while he justified himself from the charge of inconsistency in his conduct, to throw on Pitt the accusation of duplicity or insincerity, in his pretended negotiation for forming an extended administration. He admitted that the House of Commons and the minister having engaged in a constitutional contest, the former was conquered; "for though scarcely a century had elapsed, since a voice of the Commons could bestow a crown, it could not in 1784, procure the dismissal of a minister." Having related, with apparent exactitude, the leading points on which had hinged the attempt to produce an interview between the Duke of Portland and the chancellor of the exchequer, as the first indispensable step towards a general union; he hesitated not to declare, that "all the concession was on one side, while the minister refused either explanation, or the smallest advance leading to conciliation." Pitt made, it is true, a prompt, able, and animated reply to this imputation: but I will fairly own, that it impressed me as more rhetorical than solid, and carried with it no conviction; though the reasons assigned by him for the rupture of the proposed conference, if not severely scrutinised, appeared specious and reasonable to the ear.

I ought here to observe, that though Powis and Marsham seemed to perform equal parts in this portion of our history, and might be considered as joint conductors of the St. Alban's tavern meeting, no comparison could be made

between their respective talents. Marsham was an ordinary man, of good intentions, and plain sense, without ornament or decoration of any kind. But Powis possessed a classic and a cultivated understanding, strong feelings, a natural, ardent, and winning command of words, with much discrimination of character. Though in my opinion, his reverence for the House of Commons blinded him to such a point as to prevent him from perceiving or recognizing how Fox had converted that assembly into a mere engine of his ambition, while Pitt really defended the Constitution against the house; yet I do not on that account consider Powis as entitled to less respect under every point of view. Some parts of his speech on the present occasion were of uncommon beauty, warm colouring, and great truth. I allude particularly to his description of the *forces* led on by the minister, whom he divided into three squadrons, having each their appropriate characteristics. "The first" (whom I have mentioned already elsewhere), said Powis, "may be denominated his *body-guard*, composed of light, young troops, who discharge their little arrows with no ordinary dexterity, against all that refuse allegiance to their leader. The second is his corps of *royal volunteers*, the steady champions of prerogative, ever ready to attack those who presume to oppose privilege against royal authority. The last is his legion of *deserters*, attached to him by no other tie or principle than interest; and who having deserted to him from that motive, will quit him as soon as fortune and favour abandon him. Such, Mr. Speaker, is the composition of the army which has vanquished this assembly, and conquered the Constitution!" We must candidly admit that Powis was no common orator; nor ought we to be surprised that such parliamentary talents raised him ultimately to the peerage.

If, however, we admire his description of the ministerial forces, which was the result of premeditation, and may be regarded only as a composition pronounced before the House of Commons, how much more admiration is excited by Pitt's reply made on the instant, and delivered as soon as Powis sat

down! After complimenting him on his versatile facility of displaying equal eloquence on whichever side he spoke, whether supporting or opposing administration, Pitt proceeded to comment on Powis's delineation of the army ranged under his own banner. Alluding to the first corps, "who threw their little arrows with so much dexterity," he observed: "Probably the honorable gentleman's armour has not been proof against the darts of these archers; for those little weapons which he affects to despise, appear to have galled him very severely. As to the prerogative volunteers, who form the second band, I am proud of their support, because prerogative forms a part of the Constitution, like the House of Commons, and is consequently an object of my veneration. But why should he denominate the third squadron *deserters*, I own myself at a loss to comprehend, merely because they may not think proper to advance through all the stages of faction, into which it is attempted to precipitate this house." Having thus encouraged his own troops, he retorted on Powis, and endeavoured to show that no becoming testimonies of a sincere desire to unite with the Duke of Portland, and to form an united administration, had been omitted by him in his ministerial capacity, during the course of the late negotiations.

Those persons who best knew the secret springs of affairs, at the period under our review, have, however, I believe, felt, and some of them have candidly avowed to me, that the first minister could not sincerely desire, or even mean, to form a *coalition* with Fox. Nor, if he had wished it, can we easily conceive on what basis it could have reposed, that offered a prospect of completion, and still less of duration. We must suppose that Fox would have at least demanded the treasury for the Duke of Portland, the foreign office for himself, and, probably, the admiralty for Lord Keppel. Even though Lord North should have personally withdrawn his own pretensions, yet some of his connexions would necessarily have been admitted into the cabinet. Does any one imagine that Pitt, who had already attained in his own person to the head

of the treasury and of the exchequer; an eminence on which, during seventeen years, he stood firm, and from which he at last may be said to have voluntarily descended, would have retreated into the latter of those two employments merely to place the Duke of Portland in the former? His ambition was not made for such moderate limits. Still less can any person conceive that Fox would have consented to Pitt's continuing to occupy his double financial situation, and have taken office, as secretary of state, under him. How, then, was the equipoise of power to have been adjusted on "fair and equal terms?" The cabinet must have preponderated in favour of one or of the other candidate for power. And which of them would have submitted to become the subordinate? When Lord North struck his bargain with the Rockingham party, he consented to act under them a secondary part; receiving in compensation, a share of the ministerial spoils, and obtaining from them protection against impeachment, for the errors or calamities of the American war. The motives, therefore, for his conduct, were obvious, natural, venial, perhaps justifiable in every sense. Lord North did not demand to be received among his new allies, "on fair and equal terms." He exacted only indemnity, oblivion, and a participation of offices. But Pitt must have begun, like Sylla in antiquity, or like Fairfax in our own history, by laying down his power, at a moment too when he had nearly consolidated its tenure.

Other motives for avoiding such a connexion with Fox, would unquestionably suggest themselves to his mind. The late secretary of state no longer constituted an object, either of popular affection, or of royal apprehension. His own imprudence, ambition, and rapacious policy, had precipitated him from his elevation. Nor could the minister have formed a junction with the colleague of Lord North, the author in his own person of the "East India Bill," without perhaps incurring some degree of political condemnation, if not of moral contamination or censure. Fox, indeed, might and undoubtedly would, have consented to modify that obnoxious measure, in a way to render it harmless to the

Constitution. But experience of the bitter fruits produced by the late *coalition*, held out no encouragement to Pitt, for concluding a second similar union. He stood moreover on far higher ground than his antagonist; combining at once the favour of the sovereign, the attachment of the people, and the command of the House of Peers. How is it to be supposed, that he would spontaneously descend from such a situation, and consent to mingle his future fortunes in some measure with a man, whose line of public action he had stigmatized with the severest epithets; merely to conciliate the suffrages of the gentlemen who met at the St. Alban's tavern? These reflections may probably induce us to believe, that neither George the Third, nor his minister, could really intend to replace Fox in any degree, on the eminence from which he had fallen; though during the progress of a contest, in which he remained, for many successive weeks, master of a majority in the House of Commons, and before matters were ripe for their dissolution, deference towards that branch of the legislature, dictated an apparent compliance with their anxious wishes.

Pitt, with great dexterity, in the course of his reply to Powis, probably conscious that he could not altogether disprove, however he might deny or repel, the charge of insincerity, contrived to bring forward a counteraccusation against him and Marsham. To both, he indirectly applied the appellation of "a spy," as having obtained by a pretended impartiality, access to the secrets of the two contending parties, while they enjoyed the privileges and immunities of ambassadors. They took fire at the term, as I doubt not, he intended they should; and after respectively vindicating themselves from so dishonorable an imputation, Marsham read in his place, the letter addressed by the Duke of Portland to the chancellor of the exchequer. It served fully to prove, that the chief of the opposition party, as anxiously desired to commence a negotiation with the first minister, as the latter dexterously eluded and avoided a conference. Marsham professed his own perfect conviction of the fact. So did Powis. "I never acted as a spy," indignantly exclaimed Mar-

sham; "and I make no scruple of declaring my private opinion, that I did not perceive in the minister, the same conciliatory spirit which was manifested by the Duke of Portland." Powis entered into much more minute details on the subject, embracing the respective demands or preliminaries insisted on by both parties, previous to actual negotiation. Pitt exacted three conditions. Lord North's exclusion from the cabinet. A renunciation of the objectionable parts of the "India Bill;" and an interview with the Duke of Portland, "on fair and equal terms." All these points were promptly *conceded*. The *coalition*, on their part, equally demanded three stipulations. First, Pitt's virtual, though not actual, resignation. Secondly, that the duke might receive personally from his majesty, the message recommending an interview. Lastly, that the meaning of the word "equal," might be defined or explained. But all these points Pitt *refused*. Nor would he listen to any explanations on the subject, which might facilitate the accomplishment of the object itself. Powis, after specifying every particular, subjoined, "Thus stood the balance between the two parties. One, ready to make every concession: the other, none. But why should a triumphant minister make concessions?" Fox spoke with his usual ability, though not in the commanding tone that had characterized him, when conscious that he could dictate his pleasure to an obsequious majority. With more bitterness than was natural to him, he felicitated his rival on "having attained to something like a majority to support him;" nor did he spare his severest animadversions on those individuals, who having hitherto voted with opposition, had recently changed sides, and joined the administration. Fox concluded by pointing out the delusion of Pitt's proposition, to treat on "equal terms," while he rejected the offer made by the Duke of Portland, that the ministerial arrangement should be conducted "with attention to principles of equity and fairness." There could remain no doubt in the mind of any impartial person, that the expressions "fair and equal," were in themselves ambiguous, and understood in different, or opposite senses, by the

two contending parties. But these recriminations, however they might for a moment agitate the minds of men in private society, no longer impeded the progress of public business; the House voting on the ensuing evening, the extraordinary of the navy, without a division.

[11th March — 22d.] It became indeed more and more apparent from day to day, that Pitt's machinery being now nearly complete, a dissolution of Parliament would not be long delayed. Yet the opposition still fondly indulged a hope; for it did not amount to a belief; that, as no act of appropriation had passed, though the supplies were voted, ministers would not dare to apply the public money to specific purposes, contrary to all precedent, if not to law; and in direct violation of the prohibitions of the house. Various attempts were made to sound the minister on this delicate point, but without effect. Fox took however no personal part in them; and though he occasionally attended in his place, I believe he hardly, if ever, spoke on any subject, during the last eleven or twelve days that Parliament continued in existence. Burke remained equally mute; while Powis and Marsham, engaged in preparations for an approaching general election, disappeared altogether from a scene, where they had recently performed the principal characters. The little degree of opposition experienced by the chancellor of the exchequer, arose from the adherents of Lord North, or was made by that nobleman himself. Sir Grey Cooper, when the order of the day was moved, for going into a committee of supply, on the estimates for the extraordinary of the army; conscious that it offered the last occasion which would present itself, for protesting against a dissolution; expatiated with considerable energy, on the infraction of the Constitution that would arise from such a measure. He at the same time warned the ministers, that "to issue money for the pay of the forces, contrary to a resolution of the house, declaring such a proceeding to be a high crime and misdemeanour, and without any appropriation act," was not only illegal, but a subversion of the very tenure by which the king held his

crown; a vote of Parliament. No answer whatever was returned to these denunciations from the treasury bench; but the supply being voted in the committee, without any division taking place, the house adjourned to the following day.

[23d March.] As the immediate dissolution of Parliament had now become matter of universal notoriety, and preparations for carrying it into effect, were already making in the public offices; a considerable attendance was produced in the lower house, by curiosity to witness its extinction, rather than by any other motive. The first minister appearing in his place, was assailed from various quarters, on the question being put by the Speaker, that "the report on the army extraordinary should be read a first time." Mr. Eden led the way, and was followed by Lord North, as well as by General Conway. While each of them avowed that they considered themselves as addressing for the last time, an assembly, which they knew was on the point of being dissolved; they did not remonstrate or menace in less animated terms, on the supposition that such a measure should be actually carried into execution. Every argument adduced in the preceding debate, was reiterated, pressed, and urged with augmented force of language. The chancellor of the exchequer remaining nevertheless contumeliously silent, the report was read: but on a motion being made for the second reading, Lord North once more rose; and after some expostulations relative to the contemptuous treatment experienced by the house upon the present occasion, demanded, "on what principle of law, on what doctrine respecting the Constitution, on what argument, or on what authority, when Parliament should be dissolved, would ministers presume to issue money for the subsistence of the army?"

Pitt had not however advanced so far, to be now deterred from consummating his triumph, by the impotent threats of a powerless and exhausted, as well as an unpopular faction. He cut the knot, which he was unable to untie; and declining any discussions of those great constitutional points which he could not solve, and the infraction of which, he

could not abstractedly justify; confidently trusted his cause to the universal sentiment of national approbation, for covering any deviation from parliamentary usage. Like *Iago*, who in reply to every inquiry, answers,

"Ask me no questions: what you know, you know;

he briefly observed, that "gentlemen might make whatever speeches they chose, and the house might act as it thought proper; he would not say one word upon the subject." The report being then read a second time, the house adjourned, and was summoned on the following day, to attend the House of Peers; where the king having prorogued the Parliament, after pronouncing a short, but judicious speech from the throne, well calculated for the emergency, stated it to be a "duty which he owed to the Constitution and the country, under its actual circumstances, to recur as speedily as possible, to the sense of his people, by convoking a new Parliament." A dissolution followed within twenty-four hours; and the *coalition* confounded, as well as overwhelmed, amidst the storm which they had injudiciously excited, disappeared in an instant, leaving the fragments of their political greatness scattered in all directions.

[25th March.] I have related these events, as they passed under my own eyes, with the most rigid impartiality. And if I have dwelt minutely on the transactions or debates that took place in the House of Commons, during the contest between Fox and Pitt; it must be remembered that within the walls of that assembly, the history and the very existence of the country, were concentrated during more than three months. We would vainly seek them elsewhere. All the functions of government stood still: while the sovereign, the peers, and the nation looked on, expecting the issue of so extraordinary a conflict, which must necessarily impress a new character on the opening year. Never did any King of Great Britain contend for so vast a stake, since Charles the First? In contemplating the scene, Mr. Pitt arrests our first attention.

Nothing in the annals of this country, subsequent to the accession of the House of Brunswick, bore any analogy to his position. When we consider that he struggled against a majority of the House of Commons, conducted by such talents as those of Fox, from the 19th of December, 1783, up to the 9th of March, 1784; on any day of which interval, he might possibly have been impeached; and if we reflect that he vanquished so vast a combination of party, without prematurely recurring to a dissolution, till all his necessary arrangements of every kind were completed, and the whole nation had declared on his side; we shall probably admit that, as no such instance occurs before him, no similar example will probably ever be again exhibited. If, in compliance with Lord Temple's opinion, he had begun by dissolving the Parliament as soon as he was appointed first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, in December, 1783; when the people at large, and when even the inhabitants of London, as well as of Westminster, were imperfectly informed on the nature and tendency of "the East India Bill;" it is possible that a very different result might have been the consequence.

Fox's defeat arose from one fundamental error or miscalculation, into which he was nevertheless led by the experience of all parliamentary contest; namely, that a majority of the House of Commons, could compel the crown to dismiss its ministers, or could oblige the ministers themselves to give in their own resignation. In his hands, this constitutional weapon, hitherto irresistible, lost its edge, and became harmless. He affected to attribute its failure to a spirit of delusion, which, as he asserted, and as his adherents maintained, had incapacitated the British people to distinguish truth from error, imposture from reality. There is, however, no sophistry capable of binding completely a whole nation, upon points so level to every understanding; and if there existed any delusion in the estimate formed by the country, respecting the nature and tendency of "the East India Bill," the delusion still survives at this day, in all its force. But there existed another

delusion into which Fox himself fell, when he erroneously conceived, that a majority of the lower house, in whatever manner required, and whatever measures or objects it might pursue, must necessarily dictate its pleasure to the sovereign, to the House of Peers, and to the public. The two former would, indeed, if unsupported by the body of the people of England, have been found only dust in the balance, when engaged in a struggle with the genuine representatives of that people, the real organ of their will and opinion. Charles the First and James the Second, each made the experiment; by which the former lost his head, and the latter, his crown. But George the Third, neither attempted to exercise oppressive and antiquated, if not illegal, prerogatives; nor to impose on us a religion prohibited by law and odious to his subjects. And never did the British Constitution manifest its latent energies so strongly, as in the very act of arresting that assembly, which, calling itself the representatives of the nation, became in the instance before us, the instruments of the ambition of a faction, or rather, of an individual.

The steadiness, the principles, and the repugnance of the king towards the *coalition*, operated as powerful secondary agents; but they were not primary causes. Fox, attentive only to the three branches of the Constitution, which he considered as omnipotent, regarded as null the nation itself. But when awakened, roused, and informed, the people hurled him in an instant from his situation. For it was not the dissolution of Parliament, which would have reduced him and his party to insignificance, if the public opinion and confidence had accompanied him. Of this truth, a great example was exhibited in 1780, when Lord North dissolved the Parliament. The government was not idle on the occasion, and a large sum was believed to have been expended in endeavours to procure favourable returns to the new House of Commons. Yet so unpopular was the sovereign at that time, so weak the administration, and so odious the American war, that the first minister derived little permanent strength or advantage from the measure. He held out

with difficulty for one session, and surrendered early in the next, on the 20th of March, 1782. Fox on the contrary, remained for several years, only an illustrious victim of his inordinate ambition, seated on the opposition bench; till the memorable malady of his majesty in 1788, recalled him for a moment into day, only to plunge him deservedly anew into greater political depression.

The obligations which the king owed to Pitt, for liberating him from the chains of the *coalition*, at the time when they were about to have been rivetted, were certainly of the first magnitude. No other subject in his dominions, would probably have attempted, but assuredly no other individual would have successfully performed, so important and arduous a service. After witnessing the formation and extinction of three administrations, within the space of little more than twenty months, George the Third beheld in prospect, domestic tranquillity, personal freedom, and national prosperity. Nor were these the only benefits that resulted to him, from the events that we have related. All the errors and misfortunes of his reign, seemed to be swallowed up and forgotten in the grave of the *coalition*. The odium of Lord Bute's ministry, and the peace of 1763, aggravated by the prosecution of Wilkes; — the humiliating negotiation and compromise relative to the Falkland Islands, which *Junius* had consigned to perpetual reprobation; lastly, the disgraces of the American war, followed by the loss of an empire beyond the Atlantic, for which national defalcation of power and territory, the king was regarded by a large portion of his subjects as peculiarly responsible; — the accumulated evils of three and twenty years, disappeared at once, and were obliterated. Only the virtues of the sovereign seemed to survive in the memory of his people. The same prince, who, in March, 1782, laboured under a load of prejudice and unpopularity; was considered in March, 1784, as the guardian of the Constitution, worthy the warmest testimonies of affection, gratitude, and respect. They poured in upon him from all quarters, acknowledging the blessings of his paternal government, and approving the re-

cent interference of his prerogative, for the destruction of an unprincipled faction. Wilkes, who had been among the most ardent opposers of "the East India Bill," and among the foremost supporters of Pitt in Parliament, as member for Middlesex; re-appeared at St. James's, where he met with a most gracious reception. A new order of events, and a new era, seemed to commence from this auspicious date. In fact, if we would point out the period of time, from the

commencement of this long, as well as eventful reign, during which the sovereign and the country equally enjoyed most tranquillity, as well as felicity; we should not hesitate to name the interval, comprising about four years and a half, that succeeded Pitt's triumph over Fox, in the spring of 1784, down to the King's severe seizure in the autumn of 1788. Here, therefore, as at a political landmark, I shall conclude the Third Part of the Historical Memoirs of My Own Time.

ADDENDA.

MANUSCRIPT NOTES BY MRS. H. L. PIOZZI.

Page 43, l. 60. So different it is to paint mere manners, or to depict general nature; but Johnson said, that Fielding gave us the husk of life in his books, while Richardson picked out the kernel.

Page 47, l. 23. I wonder Wraxall, in all this gossip, forbears to tell how Dr. Goldsmith said once to Lord Shelburne, "Why do the people persist so in calling your lordship Malagrida? I am told Malagrida was a *very honest man!*"

Page 73, l. 3. He [Johnson] has dined with him [Wilkes] very often; and they used to laugh together at the Scotch. Johnson says, in some of his letters, that he "passed some evening, I forget when, cracking jokes with Jack Wilkes against the Scotch." It was at Dilly's: and Wilkes hearing our old philosopher loud at the other end of the room. "What is he talking there in praise of?" said he. — "Of liberty," one answered. — "Liberty!" replies Wilkes, "why the word sounds as ridiculous in *his* mouth, as religion would in mine."

Page 108, l. 81. All this is strange to me, who have seen letters from the Electress Sophia to my own great-grandfather, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, who was kept by King James the Second in the Tower, for having had correspondence with her *serenity*. He had my grandpapa with him there, a little boy — *his* portrait is at Streatham Park now; and the last Baronet, Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton, father of this Lord Combermere, burned the letters: of which I remember only that they were full of Latin quotations, and that she signed her name with a long *f. sophia*. This last Sir Robert S. Cotton was first cousin to her who writes these notes, July, 1815.

H. L. Piozzi.

Page 109, l. 28. It was certainly very odd that the Princess never made George the First learn the English, when he was Duke of Cambridge, and I believe, prayed for as heir to the crown, — very surprising, sure!

Ibid. l. 40. The poor *Pretender*, when I saw him at Florence, was under the care of a natural daughter of his, — not very young: who took the wine from him if he drank too much, and the words out of his mouth if he talked too much. It was melancholy to see the man. — La Duchesse D'Albani wore the garter

round her neck, a diamond George and cross pendant from it, I remember.

Page 113, last line. Not meaning Miss Ashe, I should think. She must have been too old to be offspring of Rodney, *sure*; yet I know no one else the writer can mean. Miss Ash was always supposed the princess's daughter, but I never heard by whom.

Page 114, l. 38. Learned, as Lord Glenberrie told me, by studying an old edition of Plutarch's Lives, wherein are delineated the orders of battle exhibited in the ancient contests at Leuctra and Mantinea; and now, they say, Bonaparte wins all his battles by this manœuvre.

Page 115, l. 12. So he [Lord Lyttelton] did; but the warning was given in *London*. He called on his uncle there, and told him of it. His uncle reproved him, and scouted the story — of a *little bird* — no dove — teasing him about his bed-curtains, and when he waked to drive it away, changing to a female figure, who said, "Prepare to die, my lord! you'll soon be called!" — "*How soon?*" cried he, "within three years? hah!" — "Three years!" repeated the figure tauntingly, "*three days!*" and vanished. This tale he told Lord Sandys; who said, "If you do really believe this strange thing, and would have me believe it, I counsel you to change your rakish life; but I suppose it is one of your fine imaginative whims, told but to make us stare." Lyttelton was a fellow of no veracity; his companions never credited any thing merely because he said it.

Ibid. l. 20. So he [Lord Lyttelton] did; and the women, Mrs. Flood and two Miss Amphlets at least, came to town at five in the morning, looking like ghosts themselves.

Page 115, l. 55. He [Lord Lyttelton] was *not* in bed; he was reading at a table, and sitting on the bed, with books, preparing for his speech on the next day to be delivered in the House of Lords. He fell forward and the table gave way. Williams found all on the floor together. He cried, "Speak, my lord! Speak, my dear lord!" but in vain.

Page 115, l. 82—85. That I did *not* know. She [Miss Lyttelton] was daughter to Lord Westcote, an *intimate* of Mr. Thrale's; and who was *no* credulous man at all, scarcely a sound believer. He told my husband the story himself;

his nephew told it *him*. All London heard the tale. He told it to everybody himself; most circumstantially, of course, to his valet, Williams. But a Welsh lady, being at the play, heard Captain Ayscough tell it in the box, two nights before the death of my Lord Lyttelton.

Page 142. He [George the Third] was deeply enamoured of Lady Sarah Lenox, who married Sir Charles Bunbury, and many, many years after, married Mr. Napier. The Duke of Richmond never forgave Lord Bute hindering his sister from being queen — of course; and said, that Wilkes ought to be encouraged, if it was only because he acted as a *thorn in the king's side*.

Page 145, l. 48. [Lady Archibald Hamilton] mother of poor dear old Mr. Hamilton, who died here [Bath] in the circus a *very* few years ago. He was father to Lady Aldborough, yet living, and to Jane Holman, lately dead. Prince Frederick was his godfather. I loved Jane Holman sincerely.

Page 147, l. 66. Her letters are proofs of her truth, her tenderness, her plain sense; but wholly unadorned by literature. I mean Queen Mary's.

Page 158, l. 86. Hamilton had none [lineal representatives] that he owned. He once told me that he was the nineteenth child of his *father and mother*, and that neither he, nor any of his brothers and sisters, had living and *legal* issue: I mean *legitimate*.

Page 165, l. 103. His (Lord North's) odd revenge on Burke should have been mentioned. The orator was inveighing against him while he slept, or appeared to sleep, till one language being insufficient for his abuse of such a minister, Burke, quoting Latin against him, pronounced the word "*Vectigal*," as here accentuated. "*Vectigal*!" said Lord North, and slept again.

Page 185, l. 12. Thurlow, enraged one day at dinner with his butler, cried "*Go to hell! Go to the devil; — to the devil, I say.*" — "*Give me a character, my lord,*" replies the arch fellow; "*gentlemen like to have a character from an acquaintance.*"

Ibid. l. 29. He (Lord Chancellor King) told my grandmother that they put him apprentice to a grocer; "*but,*" says he, "*my lady, I could never abide the shop after I had done eating the plums.*"

Page 187, l. 61. He (Mr. Jenkinson) was to

me a very particularly agreeable man as a converser; unaffectedly good-humoured, and pleasant in his voice and manner — though eminently ugly, long and lean — with strange sort of eyes, oddly thrown up, or cast down; but never looking like the eyes of any other man.

Page 190. Wallace was a coarse man with a provincial dialect — his wife was amiable. — Wedderburn was charming; but then he was all over affectation, and had beautiful eyes; and I liked Jenkinson better.

Page 342, l. 42. So he (Rumbold) was, and what is much more surprising, he had the air and look of a man of quality. Very strange, surely, in a black-shoe-boy, for such he was, a starting.

Page 383, l. 28. By no means *disinterested*: he (Dr. Moore) was sure to get a preferment from the duke, and only a life-annuity from the duchess, — to whom he probably preferred some other woman. It was prudent management of good fortune, but by no means a proof of disinterestedness.

Page 384, l. 33. The character of George the Third was uniformly moral, and uniformly discreet. He was what we call a steady boy in early youth. A confidential friend, and natural son, indeed, of one of my uncles, was about the court in Leicester Fields, when Prince Frederick of Wales died: he told my mother the following story: — "*The princess was sitting one day of her early widowhood pensive and melancholy, her two eldest sons playing about the room. 'Brother,' said the second boy, 'when you and I are men grown, you shall be married, and I will keep a mistress.' — 'Be quiet, Eddy,' replies the present king 'we shall have anger, presently for your nonsense. There must be no mistresses at all.' — 'What you say?' cries old Augusta; 'you more need learn your pronouns as the preceptor bid you do. Can you tell vat is a pronoun?' — 'Yes, very well,' replies Prince Edward: 'a pronoun is to a noun what a mistress is to a wife, — a substitute and a representative.'*"

Page 396. [Mr. Thomas Pitt.] A finical lady-like man. He married Miss Anne Wilkinson, a rich merchant's daughter, and was father by her to the mad Lord Camelford. The other sister, poor soul! married Lord George Sackville's Smith, as they called him, and was by him mother to the hero, Sir Sydney Smith.

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